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THE MESSIAH IN THE PSALMS

THE

MESSIAH IN THE PSALMS

BY

HENRY MELVILLE KING

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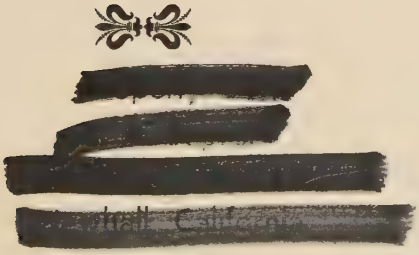

Philadelphia

American Baptist Publication Society

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To My Wife

PREFACE

THE Psalms are used largely for devotional purposes. As expressions of penitence and dependence, of faith in God and thanksgiving for mercies received, of humility and devout aspiration, they will never be superseded. They voice the deepest sentiments and record the richest experiences of devout souls of all times. So long as human nature remains what it is, the Psalms of David and his companion poets will hold a permanent place in the devotional literature of the spiritual Israel.

Mrs. Charles has beautifully said, "Beginning often in the tumultuous depths, these Psalms soar into the calm light of heaven. An inspired liturgy for all time, and the prophetic utterance of a sorrow which knew no equal, they are yet the natural expression of the struggles and hopes, the repentings and thanksgivings of the human hearts who first spoke them."

These words affirm that David was more than "the sweet singer of Israel," and that the inspired Psalms had other purposes than simply devotional. David and his companions were prophets of God, in the sense of foreseers and foretellers, who were

"moved by the Holy Ghost" to forecast the future, and the Psalms form a part of those predictive Scriptures, the burden of whose message was a coming Messiah, who should combine in one person the characters of a suffering Saviour and a victorious king. In some true sense Christ was "the Desire of all nations." In a more real and definite sense he was the expectation of the Jewish people.

This volume is an attempt to unfold the prophecies referring to Christ contained in the Hebrew Psalter, restricted for the most part to those utterances which Christ and the writers of the New Testament declare to be applicable to him. The interpretation of prophecy generally may be attended with some liability to error, but that liability is completely removed when the prophecy has been accurately fulfilled and its fulfillment has been asserted by Christ and his inspired apostles.

It has seemed desirable to substantiate the personal views of the author on important points by numerous quotations from the writings of biblical scholars of acknowledged ability and candor. These quotations, it is believed, have greatly enriched the volume and increased its value. The aim of the author has been to present the subject in such a way as to be helpful to careful students, and at the same time attractive to ordinary readers of the sacred Scriptures.

Fulfilled prophecy is indisputable evidence of

the inspiration of the Bible and of the supernatural origin of the Christian religion. It is said that Frederick the Great once asked "What proof is there of the fulfillment of prophecy?" The answer was "The Jews, your Majesty." It might have been with equal propriety "Jesus Christ, your Majesty." Christ was the theme of abundant prophecy and the subject of accurate history. May this brief study of him, in the light of both prophecy and history, help to make him the accepted King of Glory and Saviour of the world.

H. M. K.

PROVIDENCE, June, 1899.

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CHAPTER I

PSALM II

I

Psalm II

THIS psalm is one of the most interesting and instructive in the entire book of inspired poetry. Its striking language and its sublimity of thought give to it a conspicuous place in the literature of the ancient Hebrews. Undoubtedly it had, like other psalms, a local occasion and reference; but it is very difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain what it was, and connect the psalm with any known events in Jewish history in the reign of David, or Solomon, or Ahaz (in each case the attempt has been made), or of any other king. It has every appearance of having a wider and spiritual application, a prophetic meaning and outlook, and directs the thoughts inevitably to the enthronement of another King and the establishment and triumph of another kingdom, which were yet to come.

Dr. John Pye Smith says:

> The characters of this psalm are such as to leave us no rational ground of applying them to David or Solomon, or any of their successors; or to any other person than to that future Sovereign, the predicted descendant in whom David trusted and rejoiced, and tuned the harp of Zion to celebrate his holy dominion.

On the other hand, Dr. E. P. Barrows thinks the psalm may have had a local occasion and reference, but pointed distinctly to a larger fulfillment in the future. He says:

The second Psalm, which describes the vain conspiracy of the heathen rulers against the Lord's anointed king, and God's purpose to give him the uttermost ends of the earth for his possession, may have had its occcasion in the combination of the surrounding heathen nations against David. In the victorious might with which God endowed him, it had a lower fulfillment; and this was, so to speak, the first sheaf of the harvest of victories that was to follow. It was an earnest and pledge of the complete fulfillment of the psalm in Christ, in whom alone the promise made to David, "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever," [1] could have its real accomplishment.[2]

Even Kuenen acknowledges:

We do not overlook the fact that the poet who composed the second Psalm, although proceeding upon a reality, yet just because he is a poet, rises far above the reality. The historical king whom he has in view, assumes, as it were, larger proportions, and becomes as depicted by him, an ideal. Connecting points, therefore, are not wanting for applying this poem to the Messiah.

Alford says:

The Messianic import of this psalm has been acknowledged even by those who usually deny such references.

[1] 2 Sam. 7 : 16. [2] Luke 1 : 32, 33.

This psalm, then, has uniformly been regarded by Christian interpreters as Messianic, that is, as having reference to the Messiah of the Jews, and hence to the Christ of the Gospels, for they are believed to be one and the same person. The belief in the Messianic character of the psalm rests on the following grounds.

In the first place, the ancient Jewish writers invariably referred the psalm to the Messiah. Whatever views they may have held about any local reference, they were agreed as to its prophetic character. Jewish commentators say distinctly that their forefathers made this Messianic application. It is true that some of the later Jews have rejected this interpretation; but their rejection of it has evidently been the result of their unwillingness to allow Christians to appeal to the psalm as proof that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah.

Then too, the contents of the psalm plainly indicate that it was prophetic and Messianic. Its language cannot be applied to any earthly king or ruler without the greatest exaggeration. The kingdom was to be universal in its extent, and Gentiles as well as Jews were to be its subjects: "*Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*" This is exactly in harmony with what the Bible teaches about the reign of the Messiah. It is to be universally extended.

Moreover, in the psalm a rebellion is spoken of, formidable and far-reaching, embracing kings as well as peoples, which finds no parallel in the reign of David, and still less in the peaceful reign of Solomon, but which is accurately and painfully descriptive of that moral rebellion, obstinate and wicked, which exists among men against God and his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

It should be noticed, also, that the benediction at the end of the psalm, "*Blessed are all they that put their trust in him*," is a benediction which in the Scriptures is used only of God or the Son of God, and is a very strong proof that the psalm could be understood of no earthly sovereign.

But the strongest proof of all, that this psalm refers to Christ, the foretold Messiah, is the use and endorsement of it made by the inspired writers of the New Testament. If in the New Testament we find quotations from any portion of the Old applied to Christ, his person, his life, his character, his kingdom, his reign on earth, we can have no doubt but that was the original intent and design. Any other view destroys all confidence in the inspiration of these writers, and in their authority as teachers of revealed truth. Considered simply as men and students of the Hebrew Scriptures, they were as well acquainted with them and their true meaning as modern scholars, and were two thousand years nearer the origin of the writings which they inter-

preted. Considered as men inspired and especially enlightened by the Spirit of God, their exposition of the Scriptures, which the same Spirit of truth had previously inspired, may well be accepted as authoritative and final.

In Acts 4 : 25–27 we read : "Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together." In these words the disciples distinctly acknowledge the Davidic authorship of the psalm in a manner peculiarly strong and personal, and refer the psalm directly and unequivocally to Christ, declaring that the first two verses found a literal fulfillment when Herod and Pilate, Jew and Gentile, rulers and people, conspired against the life and the divine sovereignty of Christ.

In Acts 13 : 33 the Apostle Paul quotes the seventh verse of the psalm, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," as having been spoken with reference to Christ, and having been fulfilled at the time of his resurrection from the dead. In like manner in Heb. 1 : 5 the same verse is quoted as having been the language addressed by God the Father to Jesus the divine Son, indeed

as if this were its original and exclusive use, and it is brought forward in the Epistle to show the superiority of Christ, in nature and rank, to the holy angels. A similar quotation is made in Heb. 5 : 5.

Kuenen having acknowledged, as already quoted, the legitimate Messianic application of this psalm, criticises the New Testament writers for an alleged contradictory reference of the seventh verse, viz : "Thou art my Son ; this day have I begotten thee," one writer referring it, in his opinion, to Christ's glory in his pre-existent state,[1] and another to the glory conferred upon him at his resurrection.[2] If this two-fold reference were true, it would be perfectly justifiable, for Christ himself declared that the glory of his pre-existent state and his resurrection glory were essentially one and the same : "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." [3]

But Kuenen is in error in supposing two different references of the words by New Testament writers. Dr. Franklin Johnson, in his able volume, "The Quotations of the New Testament from the Old," p. 238, is correct when he says :

> The supposed diversity of view does not exist. In Acts 13 : 33 the words are brought into connection with the resurrection of Jesus, as Kuenen says, and they are brought

[1] Heb. 1 : 5 ; 5 : 5. [2] Acts 13 : 33. [3] John 17 : 5.

into no other connection in the Epistle to the Hebrews. In Heb. 1 : 5 they are quoted as referring to the glory of Christ as the Son of God, but no point of time is indicated, unless it is that of the preceding verse, which refers to the glory to which his resurrection introduced him. In Heb. 5 : 5–10 the words of the psalm are distinctly referred to this state of glory ; for both his Sonship and his priesthood are considered as having commenced after his sufferings. Thus all the instances in which the psalm is quoted are in perfect accord. It should be added that both in the Acts and the Epistle to the Hebrews the Sonship of Christ is regarded as beginning at his resurrection only declaratively, since that event demonstrated to the world a dignity which had existed from eternity.

These repeated citations and references by the inspired writers of the New Testament leave us in no doubt as to the psalm's prophetic meaning and application. It is a sublime vision of the establishment and progress of Christ's kingdom in the world, encountering opposition indeed, of men in high places and in low places, violent and widespread, but utterly vain and contemptible in view of the being and power of him against whom it rages, and it contains an emphatic declaration of the purpose of God himself, in spite of all obstacles, to place his Son, the Messiah, upon the throne of universal dominion, whose royal anger shall be certain and overwhelming destruction, and whose princely favor shall be blessing and life forevermore.

Such is the inspiring outline and purpose of this

psalm, as uniformly understood. It will be profitable to examine it now in detail and analyze its remarkable structure. The style is exceedingly dramatic, and several speakers are introduced, a fact which gives to it all the vividness and impressiveness of an actual scene. No less than four different persons, or parties, are brought forward in the brief drama, viz, the psalmist, the multitude in rebellion, Jehovah, and his Anointed Son. It is a bold and graphic representation of the greatest facts in the world's history, a truthful picture of the moral relation of men to the righteous Sovereign of the universe, an instructive lesson setting forth the folly of disobedience and the wisdom of submission to God's almighty Son, and an inspired prophecy of his ultimate and glorious triumph in the world.

We hear, first (ver. 1, 2), the voice of the psalmist, expressing his amazement at the picture which he sees among men, the wild tumult of a great rebellion, whole peoples combining in open insurrection, kings joining in a wicked and foolish conspiracy against the rightful Sovereign of all men: "*Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against Jehovah, and against his Anointed.*"

The loyal heart of the psalmist breaks out in astonished utterance at such strange and inexplica-

ble conduct, that men, that any men, should presume, should dare, should be so rash as to rise in rebellion against the Almighty, and refuse to acknowledge his Anointed Son. "Why"—a question at once of wonder and horror. Why do they enter upon such an unnatural and hazardous undertaking? Why do they embark upon such an unholy and preposterous conspiracy? It is not a cruel tyrant or an unrighteous usurper, but the true and blessed King, the lawful Sovereign of mankind, against whom they have taken up arms. "It is Jehovah himself who is assailed in the person of the King, whom he has set on the throne. Such an enterprise cannot but fail. In its very nature it is a vain thing." "In this word," says Luther, "is comprised the argument of nearly the whole psalm. How can they succeed, who set themselves against Jehovah and against his Christ?" Why, then, will men undertake and persist in such an unholy, futile, unjustifiable, insane rebellion? Why will they do it? It is the exclamation of an irrepressible astonishment and moral shock. It is no wonder that the psalmist's heart was overwhelmed with surprise. It is enough to excite the deepest amazement in every thoughtful mind that even one man, and much more that whole nations, aye, that the whole race of men, should lift up a hostile hand against a Being of infinite power and purity and love.

But in the midst of the psalmist's words, breaking in like a sudden interruption, rises the loud, blasphemous shout of the rebels, unanimous, unrelenting, and defiant (ver. 3): "*Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.*" "The metaphor," it has been said, "is borrowed from restive animals, which break the cords and throw off the yoke." There could not be a more accurate description of man's condition. This reveals the very essence of all sin. It is a breaking away from wholesome restraint, a refusal to acknowledge rightful authority, a setting up of one's own will against the will of God, a determination to have one's own way in defiance of the known precepts of Christ and the distinct teachings of conscience. Christ expressed it in a single suggestive word, when he represented the wicked and rebellious servants of the parable as saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us." We have seen how it is illustrated in the family. First, there is a chafing under parental counsel, then a murmuring against kind and wholesome restraints, then a secret disobedience of expressed wishes, then an open disregard of wise commands, then at last a bold and defiant breaking away from all home authority and influence, the asserting of one's own will as supreme; and the rebellion is an accomplished and bitter fact. A sad day is it when the heart of the child grows restless under

the holy restraints of home and parental authority. It is the swelling and bursting of seeds whose fruit will be painful and deadly. Yet the whole world is represented as having broken away from the wise and beneficent authority of the great Father, and as having lifted its rebellious hand against the Sovereign of all nations and of all worlds; and this is the spoken or unspoken sentiment of every disobedient heart: "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

Again the psalmist speaks. Seeing the foolishness and futility of all attempted resistance of the Almighty, he declares (ver. 4, 5): "*He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.*" In explanation of these striking words another has said: "From all this wild tempest of confusion upon earth, from the trampling of gathering armies, and the pride of kingly captains and their words of haughty menace, the poet turns his eye to heaven. There, on his everlasting throne, sits the almighty King, in whose sight all nations and kings are but as a drop of the bucket." It is the picture of the calm tranquillity of One who patiently laughs at the puny efforts of men to resist his authority and thwart his purpose, and holds them all in quiet derision, and then by the word of his mouth, by the tone of his voice, sends fright and confusion

into the ranks of his enemies, and moves on unhindered and undisturbed to the accomplishment of his fixed and unalterable design.

What is that design which rulers and nations had conspired to defeat? What is that divine purpose which has aroused such concentrated and violent opposition among men?

Jehovah himself is now represented (ver. 6) as appearing upon the scene, and uttering his voice in the presence of the silenced multitude, calmly, distinctly, emphatically announcing his eternal purpose, against which the combined hostility of men should have no power to prevail.

"*Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion*" (ver. 6). This is God's answer in person to his enemies. The "I" is emphatic. Men may plot, princes may conspire, the nations may oppose, but *I*, the Almighty, the Sovereign of heaven and earth, have set my anointed King, my Son, upon the throne, *I* have done it, and no power on earth can annul or set aside my action. Christ is King. Our Christ is the anointed, the enthroned of God. He may be despised and rejected of men; he may come to his own and his own receive him not; he may be scourged and spit upon, crowned with thorns, and robed in mock purple; he may be crucified, and classed with thieves, and covered with dishonor in the eyes of the world, his kingly authority laughed to scorn and his royal claims

treated with contempt; yet God says, *I* have exalted him to the throne of the universe. "*I* have set him upon my holy hill of Zion."

This does not denote any local enthronement, any literal exaltation to the throne of David, but rather a spiritual coronation, as will be seen from the next verse. It is that to which Peter referred on the day of Pentecost, when he said: "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ,"[1] and also in his Epistle when he wrote, "The stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,"[2] and the same thing to which Paul referred in his sublime words to the Philippians:[3] "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus ever knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

We sometimes forget, when we think of the apparently slow progress of Christ's kingdom among men, and the immense amount of opposition and darkness that still obstructs the way, and come together in our little companies to sing

And crown him Lord of all,

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[1] Acts 2 : 36. [2] 1 Peter 2 : 7. [3] 2 : 9–11.

that our Saviour is already on the throne, exalted to regal authority and power, placed and sustained there by the eternally fixed purpose and pledged almightiness of Jehovah. It is not now a hope, a possibility, a prophecy; but it is a realization, an accomplished fact, a glorious achievement, beyond the possibility of failure. Christ went from the cross and the tomb to the throne of universal empire.

And now a new speaker appears upon the scene, and this is none other than the Anointed Son, who boldly asserts his divine authority, and proclaims the nature and universality of his kingdom (ver. 7, 8, 9). "*I will declare the decree* [that is, the official counsel and instruction which he had received of the Father]: *the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*"

Wellhausen, in a note on this passage, in the Polychrome edition of the Bible, makes the following remarkable comment:

> The Messiah is the speaker. It is not merely the hopes concerning the future to which he gives expression; it is the claims to world-wide dominion already cherished by the Jewish theocracy. All the heathen are destined to obey the

Jews ; if they fail to do so, they are rebels. The Messiah is the incarnation of Israel's universal rule. He and Israel are almost identical, and it matters little whether we say that Israel *has* or *is* the Messiah.

This note expresses the author's view, if we understand it, that the psalm does not necessarily point to a personal and individual fulfillment, and that the Messiah may be nothing more than the Jewish nation, a view which will find little acceptance among biblical scholars. The language of the note is confusing, and its apparent interpretation of the passage is unnatural. We turn from it with satisfaction to the plain and authoritative interpretation of an inspired apostle.

The remarkable words, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," mean, as we learn from Rom. 1 : 4 and Acts 13 : 33, "this day have I declared and manifested thee to be my Son by investing thee with thy kingly dignity and placing thee on thy throne" ; and the day referred to was the day when God raised Christ from the dead. In the Epistle to the Romans Paul asserts that Christ was "declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" ; and in Acts also, the language, "this day have I begotten thee," is referred to that culminating act of Christ on earth, and the crowning article of the Christian faith, his glorious resurrection. Herder says : "The three

luminous points of a heavenly attestation of the anointed of God are the baptism, the transfiguration, and the resurrection." It is impossible to find in these words of the psalmist a prophecy of Christ's return to some earthly throne. His resurrection day was his coronation day. He is already crowned. He is now "set down at the right hand of the throne of God," dispensing grace and judgment, and guiding the affairs of his advancing kingdom. He reigns not by the will of men, not by the suffrages nor by the sufferance of men, but by the infinite grace and promulgated decree of Jehovah. And his kingdom is to be no limited, mountain-defined, ocean-bound territory, is to be confined to no single people or continent or hemisphere, but is to embrace the uncounted millions of heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth. These remotest lands, by whatever peoples inhabited, by whatever superstitions darkened, by whatever sins infested, are to become Christ's inheritance and possession. Authority is given to him to break those who will not bend, and to destroy those who will not submit. With a rod of iron will he break them, and dash them in pieces like a cracked and worthless piece of pottery. The royal Son of God sits upon his throne, holding in one hand the promise of universal dominion, and in the other the iron sceptre of his righteous rule. This is the picture which the psalm presents, not

the picture of the man of sorrows, not the picture of a suffering Messiah, but the photograph of an almighty Conqueror and world-wide King, who will subdue by his resistless power, where he cannot conquer by his princely love. It is dominion, far-reaching, universal dominion, that has been promised to the Messiah, and dominion, far-reaching, universal dominion, that he will ultimately have—the conditions and results being determined by the dispositions and conduct of individual men, when entreated to acknowledge his supremacy and become the subjects of his spiritual kingdom.

Objection has been made to the warlike tone of this psalm, as well as of the one hundred and tenth Psalm. But it must be remembered that "David was a warrior from his youth, and it was natural for him to predict the conquests of the Messiah." Of the positive Messianic character of both of these brief but remarkable psalms, Dr. Richard G. Moulton says:

> In two psalms we have the full Messianic conception; the Lord's Anointed is exalted (Ps. 2) over the whole earth in spite of the vain opposition of earthly rulers; again (Ps. 110) Jehovah bids his chosen sit at his right hand until his foes have become his footstool, while he is exalted King over the nations, priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Once more the voice of the psalmist is heard, pleading with men, in view of what has been said,

to desist from their wicked rebellion, and wisely submit to the righteous rule of him whom Jehovah has proclaimed King (ver. 10, 11, 12). "*Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth* [the influential leaders and instigators of rebellion]. *Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in your way, for soon will his wrath be kindled. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*"

This is the language of a man pleading with his fellow-men, who are capable of listening to reason and receiving instruction. It is the language of a brother pleading with his kinsmen, whom he sees engaged in a wicked and hazardous undertaking. It is the language of God's inspired prophet pleading with the creatures whom he has made, to desist from their disobedience and opposition, to lower the flag of their hostility, to ground the arms of their rebellion, to surrender at once and unconditionally, to become the loyal subjects of him who is their Maker, their almighty Sovereign, and their righteous Judge. No language could be more faithful or more tenderly persuasive. It may be briefly paraphrased thus: O men of the highest as well as of the lowest rank, act wisely; be not deaf to the voice of wisdom; abandon your insane resistance of God; enlist in his joyful service; acknowledge him whom he has anointed King

of kings and Lord of lords; place upon his sinless, royal brow, no, not there, for sinful lips may not touch such ineffable glory, but upon his pierced and bleeding hand, the kiss of humble submission and loving devotion; and do it quickly, before it shall be too late; wait not till his punitive wrath shall be kindled against you, but escape its consuming flames by the surrender of a trusting and loyal heart, and into it shall come the peace of his acceptance and the blessedness of his salvation. For blessed, unspeakably blessed, are all they that put their trust in him.

Such is the great world-drama, as it has been written by the pen of inspiration, and such are the *dramatis personæ*. What great truths does this prophetic psalm especially emphasize and set forth?

1. We must not overlook that important truth, so impressively taught, viz, the folly and danger of all sin against God. Sin is rebellion, and every man who sins willfully is a rebel against the divine government. Every act of disobedience is an act of rebellion, and the very essence of anarchy. It is a blow struck at immutable and eternal right, at the foundations of the moral universe, at the divine sovereignty. No such rebellion, it is obvious, can succeed, and every man engaged in it has only this choice, penitence or penalty.

2. But the psalm is almost entirely prophetic, and was intended to set forth the person and dig-

nity of the Messiah, and the triumph of his kingdom on the earth. Christ is King, put upon the throne by God himself, and established there by his almighty decree, the recognized Son of God, and his vicegerent on earth, to be honored and acknowledged as such by all men who would not be found opposing God. God's hand has put the crown upon his brow; let no human hand presume to take it off.

3. The kingdom of the Messiah, that is, of Christ, is to be universal. In spite of the infidelity and organized opposition of men, in spite of the inactivity and unfaithfulness of his disciples, his dominion is to embrace all nations and all men. All religious systems, however hoary with age, and however deeply rooted in the customs and faiths of men, are to go down before the onward march of Christian truth. The dark unbelief of the world of every shade, animism, heathenism, naturalism, materialism, agnosticism, deism, is to disappear before the bright shining of the Sun of righteousness. Myriads of hearts, now dumb, shall join in singing Christ's coronation hymn, and myriads of hands, now unwilling, shall help to crown him "Lord of all."

This world is Christ's world. He formed it by his creative power. He has purchased it by his redeeming grace. He has been enthroned as its rightful Sovereign. He shall yet come into full

possession of it. Its forces, its literatures, its life, its civilizations, its populations shall be his on every continent and remotest island of the sea. "The heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." Upon this infallible promise, this divine assurance, we send forth our missionaries and preach the gospel to every creature. In the words of another:

> Christ shall yet take possession of the things he has made. The steam and the lightning shall yet do his bidding; learning shall lay all its laurels at the feet of him who is the absolute truth and the infinite wisdom; art shall learn a heavenlier beauty when kneeling before the "altogether lovely"; great cities and lands now filled with violence shall be filled with his praise; the ancient capitals of civilization shall renew their former glories when he is glorified, and Jerusalem, now lying a broken diadem beneath the morning shadows of Olivet, shall be builded anew to the honor of him who was once crucified without her ancient gate. The City of God which St. Augustine celebrated is to descend upon all the homes and the institutions of men. Thy walls shall be salvation and thy gates praise. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon destroy itself, for the Lord shall be thy everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

4. Such positive revelations of the personal glory of the Messiah, and resistless power and world-wide dominion suggest corresponding duties and obligations on the part of men. It is the dictate of wisdom for every moral being to whom the knowl-

edge of this once foretold but now historic Messiah has come, to submit immediately to the great Son of God, the world's King and Saviour. It is wiser, infinitely wiser, to seek his favor than to incur his wrath, to accept his grace than to brave his power, to be enlisted with him and for him rather than against him in the conflict which is going on in the world between good and evil, between righteousness and unrighteousness, between Christ and his foes—a conflict which can have but one issue. To kiss the divine Son in humble submission and loving loyalty is every man's immediate duty and highest privilege and only safety.

5. It is, moreover, the imperative duty of those who have acknowledged the Messiah, who have submitted to the Lord Jesus Christ and crowned him supreme in their affections, to imitate the example of the inspired psalmist, and to appeal to men everywhere, "Be wise, be instructed, cease your opposition, serve the Lord, kiss the Son, yield to the Sovereign of your souls," and to show by their strong faith, their cheerful devotion, their enlarged generosity, their glad and hopeful spirits, their pure and godly lives, how "blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

CHAPTER II

PSALM XXII

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II

Psalm XXII This psalm has been uniformly regarded as one of the Messianic psalms, that is, as pointing forward to Christ, not only in a general way as the supreme Sufferer, but in a very particular and minute manner referring to events connected with the crucifixion of the Saviour.

The reasons for this belief are three. First, Jewish writers have understood it to be Messianic, that is, those of them who have admitted that their coming Messiah was to be a sufferer, have reckoned this psalm as one of the prophetic passages in their Holy Scriptures which foreshadowed the character, the condition, and the mission of their expected deliverer.

What Dr. W. A. Scott has said in "The Christ of the Apostles' Creed," in reference to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, is equally applicable to this psalm :

> It is confessed by the most ancient Jewish authorities that this prophecy does relate to the Messiah. And so plainly does it suit the character of Jesus that it has long been contended by some Jewish rabbis that two Messiahs are promised in their sacred books, one to redeem and suffer and

another to reign as a glorious Prince. A sufficient answer to this is, that such an interpretation of the old Hebrew Scriptures is clearly an invention, for the purpose of getting rid of the testimony of the sacred writers to Jesus as the promised Messiah. We are not able to find a syllable in support of it from the beginning of Genesis to the end of the book of Revelation. Moses and the prophets and the psalms know nothing of two Messiahs ; but they do speak of one Messiah, who was both to suffer and die and to triumph, to be humbled and to be exalted, to be clothed with humanity and yet to wear the robe of immortality and of ineffable majesty.

A second reason for believing this psalm to be Messianic is, that its language, while partially true of human sufferers and human situations, is fully applicable only to the divine Sufferer and the circumstances of his death. Expressions are used in the psalm which have no known or natural or possible fulfillment outside of the Christ of Calvary. To those who are familiar with the record of the life and passion of the Son of God, the language of the psalm harmonizes perfectly with the inspired historic narrative.

And the third, and the strongest and conclusive reason for accepting the psalm as a Messianic prophecy is, that Christ and the writers of the New Testament in their use of it declare it to be such with the utmost positiveness and assurance. The language of the psalm not only harmonizes with the historic narrative, but it is actually found in the

historic narrative. It has been chosen to describe the sufferings of Christ and the particular events of his crucifixion. Unless we are ready to surrender all faith in the inspiration of the writers of the New Testament, and more than that, unless we are ready to abandon all faith in the authority of Christ himself, we must accept this Messianic application of the psalm.

This does not prevent, however, some local application and some partial fulfillment, if we can determine what it is. It is not infrequently the case that divine prophecies which find their perfect and adequate and intended fulfillment in Christ, have a local meaning and reference. They are history made sublimely typical and prophetic, human experience made doubly significant and sacred, because the Son of God became our brother, and took upon himself our nature and entered into our sorrows and griefs, human experiences finding their larger meaning and purpose in *his* experiences, who was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, and who gave his life a ransom for many.

The difficulty in the case of this psalm, as of some others, is to determine its local application and make its minute descriptions apply accurately to any contemporaneous event or experience. According to the inscription, this psalm was composed by David. That is the traditional belief of its au-

thorship, though we have not, as in the case of the second Psalm, the distinct assertion of the New Testament to that effect; but even De Wette was compelled to confess that nothing decisive could be urged against this view.

There is, however, no known circumstance in the life of David to which the psalm is especially applicable. It can be said that "in none of his persecutions by Saul was he ever reduced to such straits as those here described." Calvin was led to suggest the explanation that David gathered up into one bitter experience the whole story of his persecutions and sufferings, an explanation wholly unsatisfactory. Delitzsch truthfully remarks:

> David's description of personal experience in suffering goes far beyond any that he himself had known, his complaints descend into a lower depth than he himself had sounded, and his hopes rise higher than any realized reward. Through this hyperbolical character the psalm became typico-prophetic. David, as the sufferer, there contemplates himself and his experience in Christ, and his own present and future both thereby acquire a background which in height and depth greatly transcends the limits of his own personality.

Some have supposed that the psalm was prophetic of the sufferings of the children of Israel to be endured in their exile, they being personified as a single sufferer. And still others, of late, in order to get rid of the reality of supernatural prophecy,

have placed the date of the psalm after the exile and regarded it as a history of the sufferings of that national experience. Against these views there are most serious objections.

The psalm contains descriptive language which does not fit into any real or supposable experience, personal or national, in the history of Israel. The language is too broad, and at the same time too particular, too comprehensive, and at the same time too specific. Whoever he may have been, "we must not," says Perowne, "narrow the application of the psalm to the circumstances of the original sufferer. It has evidently a far higher reference. It looks forward to Christ. It is a foreshadowing of him and of his passion, and arguing from the analogy of the sixteenth Psalm, we might even say a *conscious* foreshadowing." (That is, the writer of the psalm was himself conscious that its real, its sublime fulfillment was yet to come in him toward whom the hope, the expectation, the desire of God's ancient people was ever turning with devout longing.) "He who thus suffered and prayed and hoped in the land of his captivity might have seen by the eye of faith that Another, far mightier than he, must also suffer and be set at naught of the heathen and rejected of men, that through him salvation might come to the Gentiles."

For this thought, which is the great central thought of the gospel of Christ, finds expression in

the midst of this picture of extremest suffering, viz, that the sufferer should not go unheard nor his sufferings be disregarded. "*For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, neither hath he hid his face from him; and when he cried unto him, he heard*"; and that through that suffering, by means of Christ's strong crying and tears, as the result of the Saviour's agony and death upon the cross, the salvation of God should be preached successfully to all nations; or, as the psalm has it: "*All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto Jehovah, and all the families of the nations shall worship before thee.*"

This psalm, then, brings before us the great fact that the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, was to be a conspicuous sufferer, was to be scorned and despised by men, and in some hour of bitter consciousness was to be forsaken by God. The second Psalm sets before us the regal character of Christ, his exaltation by Jehovah to the throne of power, his coronation by his resurrection, his irresistible might, his world-wide triumph, his universal dominion. Its prophetic intimations, for the most part, still await their fulfillment. The New Testament writers were stirred by the same strong faith, and repeated the same clear prophecies, which every revolution of the earth around the sun or upon its axis is rolling on to their literal and glorious realization. But the coming fulfillment of these

prophecies and our faith in the same are dependent upon the past fulfillment of other prophecies which pertained to his earthly manifestation, his humiliation, his sufferings, his death upon the cross. "Because he took upon him the form of a servant, and humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him the name which is above every name." There is no slightest hope that the prophecies of Christ's blessed and universal empire will ever be fulfilled except as we believe that the prophecies of his humiliation and atoning death have already been fulfilled. Why do we believe in the glad triumph of Christianity? Because we believe that there were prophecies pertaining to the sufferings of Christ which came to pass. Both the suffering and the glory are matters of prophecy. The cross has been, therefore we are confident that the crown shall be. The kingdom and the glory rest upon the same prophetic foundation as did the humiliation and the shame. To deny the prophecies in reference to the lowliness, the suffering, the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, is to destroy all confidence in the coming of his blessed reign and the hope which, as Christians, we cherish in the progress of society and the redemption of the world.

The prophetic picture is complete, and covers both aspects of Christ's person and condition—Christ the Sufferer and Christ the Conqueror,

Christ the Victim and Christ the King, the human manifestation and the divine nature, the humiliation and the exaltation, the weakness and the power, the shame and the glory, the cross and the throne, the pitiful and distressing loneliness and the everlasting fellowship and oneness with God.

It is undoubtedly true that the picture of the Messiah portrayed in the Old Testament seems especially accurate to us who look upon it in the light of its accepted fulfillment. The Jews of Christ's time had, for the most part, come to cherish very faulty conceptions of the person and mission of their promised Messiah. To them he was to appear in power and royal state and establish a visible kingdom. The lamentation of the two disciples, in the shadow of their terrible disappointment at his crucifixion, voiced the sentiment of the people generally. "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." Their interpretation of prophecy was determined in no small degree by the condition of the nation as a subject province of the Roman Empire. The nature of the Jewish expectation and the difficulty of eradicating it from the minds of the early disciples prove the absurdity of the mythical theory of the origin of the Gospels. Doctor Plumptre has well said, in the "Boyle Lectures" for 1866:

> A Christ cunningly devised to meet the yearning expectations of Israel would have lived a far other life and died a

far other death than the Christ of Nazareth. In whatever degree we, taught by facts, may recognize in prophecies and foreshadowings the lineaments of a suffering Messiah, in whatever measure he may have learned from them the pattern to which he must conform himself, nothing can be clearer than that such an ideal was infinitely distant from the minds of the Jewish people. Priests, scribes, peasants, publicans would have alike shrunk from it. "Christ crucified" was "to the Jews a stumbling-block." What we are required to believe is, that they accepted a *mythus* because it contradicted their expectations. The *credo quia impossibile* is forced upon us where we should least have looked for it.

As has been said, the writer of this psalm gives to us the distressing picture of a lonely sufferer. It may be to some extent his own portrait; but it gives to us also, centuries in advance, the easily recognized, the unmistakable picture of the scenes of Calvary, with its cruel and unsympathetic and mocking crowd, and its helpless and forsaken Man of Sorrows. It undoubtedly had some reference to the experience of the psalmist, though what we cannot tell; but he looked forward to another Sufferer, who should give reality and vividness, pathos and power, to his words and fill them out to their minutest detail.

The following words are quoted from Neander:

Under these pangs of soul and body he sees before him the Holy One, persecuted, mocked, proved in the bitterest sufferings, yet steadfastly trusting in God, as described in

the twenty-second Psalm; and the idea, as delineated by the inspired psalmist, was realized—not only in itself, but in the minutest traits of its delineation also—in *him*, who stood among men as the only Holy One, not only exhibiting the ideal of holiness in conflict and suffering, but triumphing through them.

The seventh verse, "*All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head*," finds its counterpart in the narrative of the crucifixion,[1] "And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads."

On these words Meyer remarks, thereby confirming the quotation and endorsing the application, "Not as a sign of disapprobation, but according to Ps. 22 : 8, a gesture of passionate and malignant joy."

The eighth verse, "*He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him*," is repeated almost word for word in Matt. 27 : 43, and though quoted by the enemies of Christ, is an unintentional confirmation of his Messiahship.

The intense thirst described in the fifteenth verse is actualized in the agonizing experience of our Saviour as described in John 19 : 28, where we are told that Christ had actually in mind this prophetic passage and its fulfillment, "Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture

[1] Matt. 27 : 39.

might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst"; and also another prophetic passage, found in Ps. 69 : 21, "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." Another has said with clear discrimination, "The thirst was natural; the expression of it was another intimation of his desire to fulfill all that God had purposed."

Godet says:

> The object of Jesus in saying, "I thirst," was really to give occasion to the accomplishment of this last unfulfilled incident in the Messiah's sufferings, "They gave me vinegar to drink." . . Unquestionably Jesus had for a long time been tormented with thirst. This was one of the most cruel tortures of crucifixion. But he might have been able to restrain, as he had done up till now, the expression of that painful sensation. If he does not do so, it is that the last incident of the humiliations to which he was to submit may take place without delay.

The specific and peculiar prophecy contained in the eighteenth verse, "*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture,*" found an accurate, unconscious, and unmistakable fulfillment, as recorded in John 19 : 23, 24 : "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture

might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots," an incident which must have made a profound impression upon all the writers of the Gospels, for all record it as a remarkable identification of Christ with the foretold Messiah, Matthew also saying distinctly, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet."

Godet, calling attention to the remarkable literalness of the fulfillment of this prophecy, remarks :

> It is a great humiliation to the prisoner to see his garments *parted.* Thereafter he may well say there is nothing left him but to die. But what humiliation greater than to see lots drawn for his garments and so to become like a worthless plaything. David wished to describe these two degrees, and John remarks that in the sufferings of Jesus both of them are literally reproduced ; not that the fulfillment of the prophecy depended on this detail, but it came out the more clearly ; and that, above all, because everything was done by the instrumentality of the rudest and blindest agents, the Roman soldiers. On this last idea John wishes to lay stress when he concludes the recital of the scene with the words, "These things therefore the soldiers did." The Roman governor had proclaimed Jesus *The King of the Jews ;* the Roman soldiers, without meaning it, indicated him to be the true David.

In like manner Farrar says :

> Little dreaming how exactly they were fulfilling the mystic intimations of olden Jewish prophecy, they proceeded therefore to divide between them the garments of Jesus.

However much some modern interpreters may dispute the reality of prophecy and the Messianic character of these ancient Scriptures, the writers of the New Testament, under the illumination of the divine Spirit, believed in them fully and implicitly, and found in these apparently accidental circumstances the beautiful and accurate fulfillment of specific declarations which otherwise would have had no meaning whatever, and the verification of Christ's claims as the long-promised Messiah and the appointed Redeemer of the world. Moreover, Christ himself is represented as acting in the light of prophecy and consciously in the minutest details bringing to pass the intimations of God's ancient servants. The mocking crowd, with their wagging heads, the quoted words of derision, the expression of extreme and unendurable thirst, the offered vinegar, the seamless tunic over which the soldiers gambled at the foot of the cross, what are all these but so many indisputable evidences that "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and that their words, whether uttered five hundred or fifteen hundred years before Christ and his crucifixion, were converged and focused in the fullness of time in burning splendor in the life and sufferings of our divine Lord.

Moreover, if the translation in verse sixteenth, "They pierced my hands and my feet," is correct, and according to Perowne the weight of critical

authority favors it, it refers distinctly to the nailing of Christ to the uplifted cross. It may be said at this point that the Gospel narratives tally so closely with this psalm that later Jewish writers charged the Christian penmen with shrewdly and dishonestly constructing their records with this Messianic scripture in mind so as to carry conviction, if possible, to the hearts of those who refused to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah.

Strauss goes so far as to make the unwarranted suggestion that when the Messianic pretensions of Jesus had been falsified by his crucifixion, the early Christians searched the Old Testament for the conception of a suffering Saviour, and then created the incidents of the crucifixion to harmonize with their interpretation of such passages as Ps. 22 and Ps. 69.

It should be noticed that at the twenty-second verse the tone of the psalm is suddenly changed. It is not now the cry of suffering and distress, but the shout of glad confidence and the assurance of victory and universal blessing. It is as if the sufferings of the sufferer were now at an end, and not only so, but as if they had accomplished their purpose, and through them world-wide peace and prosperity had been secured, and the nations of the earth had been brought back to the worship and service of the one true God. The transition is deeply significant and the language is most remark-

able. Another has said: "The sufferer, now delivered, sees that both his agonies and his release will be productive of perfect satisfaction to himself, of eternal benefit to his brethren of mankind, and of the highest glory to God." We are reminded of those other inspired words, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." [1]

Moreover, the twenty-second verse is quoted by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews [2] as referring distinctly to Christ and his intimate relation to his people: "*I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I praise thee.*" This frequent reference in the New Testament of the language of the psalm to Christ, the peculiar severity and vicarious nature of the sufferings depicted, and the universal spiritual results of those sufferings determine beyond question the Messianic character of this psalm. Of what other sufferer, however exalted his rank or however extreme his sufferings, can it be asserted, with any degree of fitness or truthfulness, that as a consequence of his suffering, "*All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto Jehovah, and all the families of the nations shall worship before thee. For Jehovah's is the kingdom; and he ruleth among the nations.*"

Another has said:

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[1] Isa. 53 : 11. [2] 2 : 12.

It will always be difficult to demonstrate that some unknown righteous man in the Old Testament could hope, as the author of Ps. 22 does, that the effect of his deliverance would be the conversion of Gentile peoples and the establishment of the kingdom of God to the very ends of the earth.

The language of Krummacher[1] is so just and sympathetic in its interpretation of this psalm that it is worthy of extended quotation:

The portrait of a guiltless sufferer gradually increases to a sublimity which has found its perfect antitype in the holy Jesus. In the picture, features appear of which we meet with only slight traces in David's history, and which, therefore, call upon us to seek their literal fulfillment elsewhere. For the sufferer in the Psalms is not only represented as the offscouring of the whole world, not only do those who see him say to him, "He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing that he delighted in him," not only must he agonizingly exclaim, "I am poured out like water; all my bones are out of joint, and thou hast brought me into the dust of death," but he must also see what David never experienced, that his hands and feet were pierced, and that his enemies parted his garments among them and cast lots upon his vesture.

Besides this, his passion ends in such a manner as no other man's sufferings; for a glorious crown of victory at length adorns the head of this tried and faithful One. Yea, he receives the testimony that his sufferings shall result in nothing short of the salvation of the world, and the restoration, enlightening, and beautifying of the Gentiles. Who is so blind as not to perceive that this just man, who is so

[1] "The Suffering Saviour," pp. 414, 415.

sorely tried, and who comes forth so triumphantly from the conflict, as depicted by the Spirit in this twenty-second Psalm, is no other than the promised Messiah in the person of Jesus of Nazareth? This is beyond a doubt, even if the New Testament had not expressly given that psalm such an application. Even one of the champions of modern infidelity, prophesying like Balaam, has called the twenty-second Psalm "the program of the crucifixion of Christ"; and another, against his will, is carried away to use these words: "One might almost think a Christian had written this psalm."

I have reserved for consideration last the remarkable language of the first verse of the psalm, viz: "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" language which Christ solemnly repeated when suffering the agony of the cross. The psalmist may have found some occasion or occasions in his checkered life, when it seemed to him that God had forgotten him, just as in the intervening ages, and possibly to-day, there may be some of God's children, who in the midst of life's extremities and burdens are tempted to feel that God has utterly withdrawn from them his presence and sympathy and aid, and abandoned them to the unpitying power of adverse circumstances or to the cruel torture of a relentless fate.

But that Christ, the holy Son of God, should have used these words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" is doubly significant, as bearing conclusively upon the Messianic character

of the psalm, and as revealing also the nature, purpose, and extent of the suffering which our Saviour endured in our behalf.

Another has beautifully said, it is "not the why of impatience or despair, not the sinful questioning of one whose heart rebels against his chastening, but rather the cry of a lost child, who cannot understand why his father has left him, and who longs to see his father's face again. . . What these words were in the lips of the Holy One of God, heart of man may not conceive. For a moment, in that last agony, the Perfect Man was *alone*, alone with the sin of the world."

Ah, is not that the secret of the exclamation which burst from the Saviour's lips? Innocence forsaken by God! Spotless purity abandoned by the Spirit of the All-Holy! Absolute sinlessness and unimpeachable moral excellence under the displeasure of the Almighty! How can we account for this abnormal and distressing fact, except upon the basis of the revealed truth—Christ's mysterious fellowship with sin in his suffering and death? At that supreme moment of his mission on earth he felt the awful shadow of sin's curse, which is eternal separation from God. "He was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin." "He bore our sins in his own body on the tree." Christ in that hour of extremest suffering alone with sin, your sin and my sin and the sin of the world! Who can com-

prehend the meaning of the words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Oh, unutterable agony! Oh, unspeakable grace!

The mythical theory of Strauss, that these words of the psalm were, after the crucifixion, put into the lips of Christ, has no rational basis. Neither is the view of Paulus, Schleiermacher, and Hase satisfactory, or in harmony with the distinctively prophetic character of other language in the psalm, viz, that these words used by Christ were simply a "lamentation expressed in a scriptural statement, showing that he had the whole psalm, with its sublime conclusion, before his mind." The words were obviously Messianic as uttered by the psalmist, and pointed forward to a definite experience of sorrow which the Redeemer of mankind was to have, when he took upon himself human guilt in that final act of expiation. We may not measure the abyss of the anguish, but we are not left in doubt as to its cause. And this spiritual suffering (not the thirst or the pain from the bodily wounds) was the supreme thought of the prophecy as it was the supreme significance of the crucifixion. The uniform evangelical interpretation has been well expressed by Dr. James Stalker in these words:

> Not only did the world's sin thus press itself on his loving and holy soul in those near him; it came from afar, from the past, the distant, and the future, and met on him. He was bearing the sin of the world; and the consuming

fire of God's nature, which is the reverse side of the light of his holiness and love, flamed forth against him, to scorch it away. . . These were the sufferings which made the cross appalling. . . He hung long silent amidst the darkness without and the darkness within, till at length, out of the depths of an anguish which human thought will never fathom, there issued the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was the moment when the soul of the Sufferer touched the very bottom of his misery.

It was the moment too, when the cross of Christ came into relation to the guilt and need of the whole race. Therefore let the faith, the penitence, the love of every human heart find expression in the famous hymn of Bernard of Clairvaux:

O sacred Head, now wounded,
With grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, thine only crown;
O sacred Head, what glory,
What bliss, till now was thine!
Yet, though despised and gory,
I joy to call thee mine.

What thou, my Lord, hast suffered
Was all for sinners' gain;
Mine, mine was the transgression,
But thine the deadly pain;
Lo, here I fall, my Saviour!
'Tis I deserved thy place;
Look on me with thy favor,
Vouchsafe to me thy grace.

What language shall I borrow
To thank thee, dearest Friend,
For this, thy dying sorrow,
Thy pity without end?
O make me thine forever;
And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never,
Outlive my love to thee.

CHAPTER III

PSALM CX

III

Psalm CX

This psalm, though one of the shortest, is one of the most remarkable of the inspired hymns of the Jewish Scriptures. It is a poem of wonderful beauty and of striking imagery, and bears conspicuously upon its surface its Messianic application. Indeed, it seems to be a prophecy of the person and office of Christ, and the glory and triumph of his kingdom, from beginning to end. Some psalms have in them scattered verses which refer to the coming Messiah, to some aspect of his character, some event in his life, or some characteristic of his reign. This psalm is entirely referable to Christ. Some psalms have, first, a local and contemporary application, and then a fuller and prophetic application to One who was to come. This psalm seems to refer clearly, distinctly, and only to the future Priest-King of the Jewish nation and of the world.

This exclusive reference of the psalm is advocated by Oehler and others. Oehler says :

> In Ps. 2, 45, 72, 110, a royal personage is depicted, to whom neither David nor Solomon corresponds, but only he of whom they were types. There are two schools of interpretation with regard to these psalms. The one, repre-

sented by Calvin, holds that, in the first instance, they refer to a king of Israel, but that the ideal predicates affirmed of him refer to Christ. The other school holds that the psalmist had before him the ideal theocratic king, and so spoke directly of Christ. This last view cannot be set aside by the objection that the psalmist could not sing of a future king, for he does sing of a future glory of the holy city (Ps. 87), and the future advent of Jehovah to establish his kingdom (Ps. 96–98). This view seems to be decidedly the more natural in Ps. 2, 72, 110.

This psalm resembles the second Psalm in its ascription to Christ of regal rank and divine character, of irresistible power and world-wide victory; but it is differentiated from it in some important particulars. Not only is Christ's kingly and divine character proclaimed in it, but also his priestly or sacerdotal character. The psalm consists of two parts. The first part begins with an affirmation of Christ's universal sovereignty, and the second part begins with an affirmation, confirmed by a solemn oath, that Christ was to be invested in perpetuity with the functions of a universal priesthood. Moreover, this psalm has the positive acknowledgment of Christ, both as to its Davidic authorship and its application to himself, and also that David, when he composed the psalm, was under the distinct guidance and inspiration of the Spirit of God. In Mark 12 : 35–37 we are told that "Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David? For

David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore himself calleth him Lord ; and whence is he then his son?" The scribes acknowledged only the human nature and descent of the Messiah, that he was a descendant of David. Christ proved to them, out of their own Scriptures, that David himself acknowledged his divinity, and that he did it when speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit. His quotation of the first verse of this psalm, and the manner of it, obviously claims its application to himself as the Messiah, and is evidence of his belief that the psalm was written by David, whose name is attached to it, and to whom it has been almost universally ascribed, and also that the psalmist in making these revelations, and similar ones, about the Messiah who was to come, was aided and controlled by the Spirit of God. The language is peculiarly plain and positive. "David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand." Any other interpretation seems to be a palpable contradiction of the meaning of Christ's words, and a clear violation of all the laws of language, and at the same time a reflection upon Christ's wisdom or moral sincerity or upon both.

Dr. W. N. Clarke states the case clearly and fairly, when he says, in his "Commentary on Mark,"

concerning this passage (Ps. 110 : 1, quoted exactly from the Septuagint) :

Jesus here affirms (1) that David was the author of it. His use of it turns upon this fact ; and thus he assents to the title that stands above the psalm, both in the Hebrew and the Septuagint. (2) That David made this utterance "in the Holy Spirit." This can mean only that the utterance was not solely David's own, but was made under an inspiration of the Spirit of God. No theory of inspiration is given here, but the fact is expressly stated. (3) That the passage was Messianic. Not for himself,[1] any more than of himself[2] did David say this. It was one of those forward-looking utterances that found their full meaning only in him who was to come.

The importance of this psalm and the influence of Christ's interpretation of it upon the Christology of the early church can hardly be overestimated. Doctor Clarke says further :

The passage, thus brought by the Lord himself to its application, took a powerful hold upon the faith and imagination of the church, and entered into the formation of doctrine.[3] Here, however, the argument of Jesus turns on the word Lord, and implies [asserts] the divinity of the Messiah. David's son would be a man ; but this Son of David was to be one whom David could also call his Lord. More than man, therefore, he must be. This is a warning that the scribes have their ideas of the Messiah still to mend and to conform to the teaching of the Scriptures.

[1] 1 Peter 1 : 12. [2] 2 Peter 1 : 21.

[3] See Acts 2 : 34–36 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 25 ; Eph. 1 : 20 ; Col. 3 : 1 ; Heb. 1 : 3 ; 8 : 1 ; 10 : 12 ; 12 : 2 ; 1 Peter 3 : 22.

If there were no other reference to this psalm in the New Testament than this one by Christ, which is recorded in each of the first three Gospels, this one reference would be enough to establish the inspired character of the writing and its true Messianic import. But there is no psalm that is referred to so often in the New Testament Scriptures in proportion to its length as this.

The first verse: "*The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool,*" is quoted by Peter in his great sermon on the Day of Pentecost, a sermon which carried conviction to the minds of three thousand hearers. The aim of Peter's discourse was two-fold: first, to show that the great miracle of Pentecost was the fulfillment of specific prophecy; and secondly, to prove that Jesus who had just been put to death, was the foretold Messiah. It was addressed mainly to "the men of Judea," and was an appeal to their own Scriptures, to prove that Jesus of Nazareth, a man "approved of God by miracles and wonders and signs," had been crucified and raised from the dead according to the well-known teachings of their own inspired prophets, prophetic teachings which could not have been in any sense fulfilled in the writers themselves. "For David is not ascended into the heavens"; but on the contrary, disclaiming all personal reference to himself in his words, and distinctly deter-

mining their application, "he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool." Peter's argument is based upon David's confession. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Here, then, we have the inspired apostle's interpretation of the meaning and intent of the words of the inspired psalmist, whom he calls "the patriarch David," and also his own positive declaration that the ancient prophecy was fulfilled, when God raised Jesus from the dead. Then he was "declared to be the Son of God with power," as Paul says, and exalted to God's right hand, that is, to a share in the government of the universe, in the supreme executive functions of the Almighty, until all enemies of Christ and truth and righteousness shall be brought into subjection to him. It is evident from the language of the psalm, and also from the interpretation of Peter, that a permanent dignity and glory is here meant, a dignity and glory not less than that of God himself. The same truth is affirmed by Paul[1] in similar language, "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue

[1] Phil. 2 : 9–11.

confess that he is Lord [not to the disparagement or dishonor but], to the glory of God the Father."

Perowne says:

> If, then, this be the meaning, if the solemn address, "Sit thou at my right hand," is equivalent to saying, "Be thou associated with me in my kingly dignity, in my power and universal dominion," then the best comment on the passage is to be found, as even some of the Jewish interpreters have seen, in Dan. 7 : 13, 14, where "one like the Son of man comes with the clouds of heaven, and is brought unto the Ancient of days. . . and there is given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him."

The two passages, the one from the psalm and the one from Daniel, are in fact combined by our Lord himself, when standing before the high priest he says: "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

This language of the psalm, expressive of the exalted dignity and prospective universal triumph of the Messiah, is again and again used in reference to Jesus in the New Testament. In Ephesians[1] it is written: "According to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and domin-

[1] 1 : 20–23.

ion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come : and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church," that is, even him who is thus exalted and glorified above all beings in all worlds, hath the Father, in his boundless mercy, given to be the head of the church.

In Hebrews[1] we are told that Christ "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," where the language of the psalm is plainly used.

In 1 Cor. 15 : 25 we are told that Christ "must reign, until he hath put all enemies under his feet ; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," language which is borrowed from David's psalm in reference to the universal supremacy of Christ among men, and then is expanded to include, in addition to all human foes and human opposition, those spiritual enemies, which array themselves against the peace of God's children and the holy tranquillity of their life, "the last of which is death."

And then in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews the writer, in showing the supreme excellence of the Christian dispensation over the past, and the vast superiority of Christ, whom he

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[1] 12 : 2.

calls Son of God, maker of all worlds, brightness of the divine glory and the express image of God's person, over all the angelic order of beings, exclaims triumphantly in concluding his argument: "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool,'" as God did say to Jesus the Messiah, as you will find recorded in the one hundred and tenth Psalm of David? This is the culminating point of the writer's argument, and its force rests upon the universal acknowledgment of his hearers that this psalm referred to the Messiah, and that there was only one being in all the universe so high, so exalted, so powerful, so divine, that its language was applicable to him, and that being was David's Son and David's Lord.

But not only is that part of the psalm which declares the regal dignity of the Messiah quoted in the New Testament by Christ and Peter and Paul as applicable to our Lord, but in like manner, that part which declares his priestly character and office is quoted several times in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and forms a main point in the argument of the writer that Christ's priesthood was superior to the Aaronic priesthood, and his sacrifice was of infinitely more value than all the sacrifices of the past, both in its intrinsic efficacy and as being the end of the whole sacrificial system, begun by Abel and

continued down through all the intervening centuries. This Epistle was written to the Hebrews, and presents a thoughtful and irresistible argument based upon the Hebrew Scriptures, that their priests and their offerings found their highest meaning and fulfillment in him who was the great High Priest of the new dispensation and offered himself as the one sufficient and acceptable sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

The inspired writer, in proving that the priesthood of Christ was far loftier and more glorious than any that had preceded it, referred to the priesthood of that remarkable man who suddenly and mysteriously flashed into view in the life of their great patriarch Abraham, and about whom and whose priesthood the Jews acknowledged that there was much that was unique and sublime, and repeating over and over again the declaration of their own inspired psalm reminded the Jews that Melchizedek was but a type of the Messiah, and that Jesus was the one to whom both the type and the prophetic utterance pointed. In the fifth chapter (ver. 4–6) the writer affirms that Jesus was appointed by God to both the kingly and priestly office, and quotes in proof of the first the language of the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee," and in proof of the second, the language of the one hundred and tenth Psalm: "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Mel-

chizedek." In the sixth chapter (ver. 20) the writer quotes the same words again as having reference to Jesus, "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek," in which the entrance of Jesus into the unseen world and the perpetuity of his intercessory work there are made the basis of the Christian's immortal hope. And in the seventh chapter (ver. 1–3) the story of the meeting between Abraham and Melchizedek is told, and some of the remarkable things about Melchizedek are spoken of, viz, his two-fold name, King of Righteousness and King of Peace, his mysterious origin and disappearance, "without father, without mother, without pedigree, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life," and the uninherited and untransmitted nature of his priesthood, and then it is significantly added, he was "made like unto the Son of God"; in these points of resemblance he, more than the Levitical priests, was the true type of the Saviour of the world. And again, twice in this same chapter (ver. 17, 21) the language of the psalm is quoted to show the superiority of Christ's priesthood, first, because of his eternal existence—it was "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." "Thou art a priest *for ever*," and secondly, because it was confirmed and established by the immutable oath of the Almighty,

"The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

I know of no better or clearer explanation of the thought and intent of the psalmist than that given by Dr. R. W. Dale:

> In the Psalms an inspired writer fixes on the underived and untransmitted and royal priesthood of the king of Salem as the highest representation of the priesthood of the Messiah; and just as the kingship of a Jewish monarch is sometimes described, in the same book, in language which passes, by imperceptible gradations, into a vision of royal grandeur and authority which no earthly prince could ever possess, so the priesthood of Melchizedek is idealized and exalted until it transcends in dignity and permanence the measures of a merely human ministry. "Thou art a priest *for ever* after the order of Melchizedek." The priesthood of Melchizedek, because of its peculiar characteristics, is employed to denominate the everlasting priesthood of the Messiah. As priest of the Most High God, the Canaanitish king stood apart from all the consecrated descendants of Aaron, deriving his dignity from none, transmitting it to none; his royal priesthood was the noblest visible approach to the everlasting priesthood of the Son of God; and the psalmist therefore speaks of Christ as belonging to the same priestly order, and as fulfilling the idea which in the priesthood of Melchizedek was represented in an inferior form.

This interpretation is abundantly confirmed by the inspired writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He saw in the psalm the most distinct and indisputable evidence that it was a divinely prophetic utterance pointing to Jesus Christ. Christ in his discussion

with the Jews had had occasion to speak of the first part of the psalm, that is, the ascription of regal and divine dignity, as referable to himself. The writer of this Epistle declares that the second part, that is, the bestowment of a universal and eternal priesthood, is also applicable to Christ. Indeed, in the tenth chapter (ver. 12, 13), by a remarkable combination of words he claims the whole psalm as pertaining to Christ and foretelling both his kingly and his priestly characters, and the relation between them: "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."

We find, then, that this short psalm of seven verses is referred to no less than nineteen times in the New Testament as being an inspired prophecy fulfilled in Jesus Christ, eleven times by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, whoever he may be believed to have been; by Paul in the Epistles to the Romans,[1] Ephesians,[2] and Colossians,[3] and in First Corinthians;[4] by Peter on the day of Pentecost, and also in his First Epistle,[5] and by Christ himself on two different occasions.[6] Such an accumulation of testimony, gathered from such sources, ought to leave students of the Bible in no doubt as to the inspiration and Messianic import of

[1] 8 : 34. [2] 1 : 22. [3] 3 : 1.
[4] 15 : 25–27. [5] 3 : 22. [6] Mark 12 : 36; 14 : 62.

this beautiful, striking, and sublime Hebrew poem. Doctor Alexander says: "The repeated, explicit, and emphatic application of this psalm in the New Testament to Jesus Christ, is so far from being arbitrary or at variance with the obvious import of the psalm itself, that any other application is ridiculous."

But we must not overlook the convincing internal evidences that this is the character and import of the psalm. I have said that it bears conspicuously upon its surface its Messianic application.

First, David, whom we believe, on the authority of Christ and his apostles, to be the author of the psalm, acknowledges the subject of the psalm to be his Lord. "Jehovah said unto my Lord." This he would not have done if he had looked upon him as being simply his natural successor to the throne.

Secondly, no earthly king can by any possible use of language, or by any stretch of the imagination, be said to sit on the right hand of Jehovah, sharing his dignity and his supreme dominion. This can only be true of the Son of God, of whom it is said that to him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord.

A third internal evidence that this psalm must refer to Christ, is found in the fact that the subject is represented as a king and at the same time as a priest, combining in one person the regal and the sacerdotal offices. He was "a priest for ever after

the order of Melchizedek," a royal priest invested with a perpetual priesthood. No Jewish kings were ever priests of the temple. The priestly class was a distinct class.

And a fourth internal evidence that Christ, and only Christ, can be the subject of the psalm, is that all the followers of this Priest-King are represented as themselves priests, clad in holy vestments, engaged in a spiritual warfare, and that his victory is to be complete and his reign universal. This precludes the possibility of any other application except to our Saviour-King. It sets before us the great truth of the universal priesthood of all believers in him, and also the ultimate conquest of the world in his name. Such a spiritual warfare and such a glorious triumph are the things which characterize the blessed reign of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth, and pertain only to his kingdom.

Professor C. H. Toy expresses his opinion of the non-Davidic authorship and late date of this psalm and the authority for it in the following comment upon the fourth verse :

> But what differences the thought of the psalm from that of similar ones (as Ps. 2, 45, and 72) is the statement of our verse, that the king was at the same time a priest. This requires us to look for a period in Jewish history when one man united in his person the royal and sacerdotal offices, . . . and we know of no time when such a condition of things existed but the Maccabean.

In order to escape the purely prophetic character of the psalm, and its direct and exclusive reference to the Messiah, Professor Toy is compelled to bring the date of the psalm down to the Maccabean period, and thereby disputes the testimony of Christ as to its Davidic authorship. That such was Christ's testimony he frankly acknowledges. Speaking of Christ's language, he says: "Here David cannot, as is sometimes the case, be understood as a vague name for the book of Psalms, but must mean the individual man so-called." In other words, Christ believed that David was the author of the psalm, and so declared. Therefore his ascription of the psalm to David is pronounced by Doctor Toy to be untrue. It is not an attempt to excuse Christ on the ground that he spoke in a general, impersonal way, or that he simply acquiesced in the popular belief as to the authorship of the psalm; but it seems to be a plain denial of the veracity of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Franklin Johnson makes answer to Doctor Toy's view as follows:

> Our Lord ascribes the psalm to David, and there is absolutely no reason to call the Davidic authorship in question. As Alexander has said, it is corroborated by the internal character of the composition, its laconic energy, its martial tone, its triumphant confidence, and its resemblance to other undisputed psalms of David. The effort is made to bring the psalm down to the Maccabean age, not on the ground that its language is of this later age, but on the

ground that we might hope to find a Jewish king at that time who was also a priest, to whom it could be said: "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." . . . The Maccabees were indeed priests by legal descent; but the psalm speaks of one who was to be priest not by legal descent, not after the order of Aaron, but by extra legal title, "after the order of Melchizedek." Besides, of whom but of Christ could it be said, "Thou art a priest for ever"? Thus on every ground the psalm must be regarded as referring to our Lord directly.

Edersheim, speaking of the use which Christ makes of this psalm, expresses his opinion of its authorship, date, and Messianic character in no uncertain language. He says:

Without addressing any one in particular, he put to them all what perhaps was the most familiar subject of their theology, that of the descent of Messiah. Whose son was he? And when they replied, "The Son of David," he referred them to the opening words of Ps. 110, in which David called the Messiah "Lord." The argument proceeded, of course, on the two-fold supposition that the psalm was Davidic and that it was Messianic. Neither of these statements would have been questioned by the ancient synagogue. But we could not rest satisfied with the explanation that this sufficed for the purpose of Christ's argument if the foundation on which it rested could be seriously called in question. Such, however, is not the case. To apply Ps. 110, verse by verse, and consistently, to any one of the Maccabees, were to undertake a critical task which only a series of unnatural explanations of the language could render possible. . . . For our own part, we are content to rest the Messianic interpretation on the obvious and natural meaning of the

words taken in connection with the general teaching of the Old Testament about the Messiah, on the undoubted interpretation of the ancient Jewish synagogue, on the authority of Christ, and on the testimony of history.

Wellhausen assigns still another reason for the late date of the psalm, which needs only a moment's consideration. He says: "The comparison with Melchizedek brings the date of the psalm very low, because the narrative in Gen. 14 is of extremely late origin." Such a conclusion will have little weight with those who utterly disbelieve his premise, especially, as we have seen, since the whole New Testament is arrayed against it.

The analysis of the psalm is briefly as follows:

In the first two verses the Messiah is represented as taking his appointed place at the right hand of Jehovah, and clothed with power to subdue all nations to himself. Indeed, he is acting in alliance with Jehovah. "*Jehovah shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion*"; that is, the scepter of thy might and thy kingly majesty, Jehovah shall stretch it forth out of Zion.

In the third verse the Messiah assembles his hosts for the strange battle. They come together under his banner as free-will offerings, and are as numerous as the drops of morning dew and as beautiful as they, glistening in their garments of holiness. It is an exceedingly poetic figure. Old men and matrons, young men and maidens, appear

filled with the freshness and vigor of an eternal youth, and all clothed with the shining robes of their holy and priestly character. Milton borrowed this figure in his description of the angelic hosts

> Dewdrops which the sun
> Impearls on every leaf and every flower.

In the fourth verse the Messiah is proclaimed a perpetual priest, under the immutable oath of the Almighty, whose might is that of sacrificial love, who is to bear the sins of the world and to make atonement for human guilt; a kingly priest and a priestly king, the only supreme Pontiff of penitent and believing souls. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

In the remaining three verses of the psalm the inspired penman gives us the picture of the final and utter conquest of all enemies of the Messiah. It is the picture of a battlefield after the battle is over. Those who have persisted in their opposition to the bitter end, and have not bowed to the scepter of his mercy, are made to fall under the rod of his power. Kings and leaders are unable to stand before his onward march. Those who are exalted in human power and sinful pride are made to bite the dust. He goes from victory to victory, pursuing his routed enemies, as unexhausted as he is irresistible, ever renewing his strength as the warrior who drinks of the brook by the way, and is

perpetually refreshed for the conflict, until the last trace of opposition has utterly disappeared.

The central and emphatic thought of the psalm is undoubtedly the two-fold aspect of the character and mission of Jesus Christ, his regal dignity and his priestly work. To fail to apprehend either, is to miss his true glory and his saving power. On the one hand, we are taught that Christ "bore our sins in his own body on the tree," and on the other hand, that "the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." True faith must accept Christ as the propitiation for all sin, and must place heart and mind and being at the feet of Christ, and "crown him Lord of all." Both conceptions are finely presented in the familiar hymn of Doctor Watts :

Now to the Lord, who makes us know
  The wonders of his dying love,
Be humble honors paid below,
  And strains of nobler praise above.

'Twas he who cleansed our foulest sins,
  And washed us in his precious blood ;
'Tis he who makes us priests and kings,
  And brings us rebels near to God.

To Jesus, our atoning Priest,
  To Jesus, our superior King,
Be everlasting power confessed,
  Let every tongue his glory sing.

CHAPTER IV

PSALM XVI

IV

Psalm XVI

This psalm gives to us the beautiful expression of the soul's choice of God and delight in him, of its repudiation of all other worship and devotion to his service, of its comfort and satisfaction with the lot assigned to it by divine Providence, and its perfect rest in his promised help and protection, both for this life and the life to come, in all possible emergencies, in the darkness of death and the grave, and impliedly in the revealing fires of the judgment day. It begins with a confession of weakness and need: "*Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.*" It ends with a shout of victory: "*Thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*" It begins with the acknowledgment of God as the source of all good and satisfaction here: "My good is naught outside of thee;" and it concludes with the confident declaration that with God there is the consummation of all joy and felicity, which shall be without end: "*In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*"

Ewald says of this psalm:

There is hardly to be found a clearer or more beautiful declaration concerning the whole future of the individual man than this. For the calm glow of the highest inner expansion and serenity here lifts the poet far above the future and its menaces, and it stands clearly before his soul that in such continued life of the spirit in God there is nothing to be feared, neither pains of the flesh, his body, nor death; but where the true life is, there also the body must finally come to its rest; because deliverance also of the soul from the grave is possible through him who wills only life.

There are no words within the limits of the Old Testament that remind one so much as the last verses of this psalm of the ringing conclusion of the Apostle Paul's elaborate argument for the resurrection in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. . . . Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is sometimes said, it seems to us most unaccountably, that the doctrine of immortality is not taught in the Old Testament Scriptures. It is incredible that a people which had been preserved by God in its monotheistic faith, and had been for centuries under the tuition of his prophets, should be an exceptional people in this important particular. The Egyptians believed in it, and had their conspicuous symbols of their faith. Heathen nations have had invariably some conception of the

continued existence of the soul after death. Cicero wrote concerning the soul's immortality. Plato gave special prominence to the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. Buddhism may teach the annihilation of personality, but not of life, in its mysterious dogma of Nirvana. Aboriginal peoples, the most savage and degraded, have looked forward to the happy hunting grounds of another sphere of existence. And all men everywhere have felt the irresistible longing of the soul, and the uniform prophecy which springs spontaneously from the sense of the incompleteness of its present life. Moreover, to say that God's ancient people did not believe in the future existence of the soul, is to say not only what seems utterly incredible, but what seems to be disproved by any candid interpretation of their sacred books. Modern Jews, with no other accepted source of instruction than the Old Testament, have believed to a man in the doctrine of immortality. It is not, indeed, taught so fully, and with such clear emphasis, in the Old Testament as by Him who said, "I am the resurrection and the life," and "he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," and who is declared to have come "that he might bring life and immortality to light in his gospel." But it is nevertheless taught by the Old Testament Scriptures impliedly from beginning to end, and distinctly and clearly in instances not a few.

It is, indeed, true as Dr. George A. Gordon says:

> It is because the prophets stand for moralism of the profoundest and most august order, that they lay foundations so broad and strong for faith in the permanence of the human soul. They involve so completely human existence and interest with the Divine existence and interest that the idea of the essentialness of humanity to God becomes almost inevitable. God is sublimely implicated in the history, experience, and destiny of Israel, and ultimately in the life of the race; hence that life must go on while God goes on. This is the aspect under which the Hebrew prophets view the life of their people, and to some extent, the life of the world. . . Human existence takes on, in the estimation of these seers, a character so vast and grand that it instantly becomes a sublime prophecy on its own account.
>
> This is the unequaled merit of Hebrew delineation in its highest forms. It finds the reality of life, discovers the character of human existence, and makes that speak for itself. As it was with the multitudes before whom Jesus stood when Pilate said, "Behold the man!" so it is with sympathetic students, when the Hebrew prophet says, "Behold human life!" It may be outraged by condition, disfigured by evil treatment, covered with the emblems of mockery, and crowned with shame, yet is there something divine and awe-inspiring in it, and its silence and patience become a mute but mighty prophecy of a hereafter of honor and power.

If there were no distinct enunciation of a personal immortality in the earlier books of the Bible, the doctrine would nevertheless be there as an

atmosphere, as a great undertone, as an implied and inevitable truth, as well of man as of God. The conception of human life given there is too grand, too vast, too sublime, to find its only symbols in the shadow, the flower, and the motion of a weaver's shuttle. Under the moral teachings of these old prophets, and in the light of the revealed interest of the Almighty, human life takes on far-reaching proportions; the soul of man is seen to be immortal by reason of its sublime worth and dignity and relation to the infinite and eternal Spirit.

But the distinct enunciations of immortality are by no means wanting in this elder revelation to ears that are willing to hear them. They come to us in the tones of Job and Isaiah and David, as well as in the translation of Elijah, expressing a clear and positive faith in a life beyond this, in language which we of this new and completer dispensation do not hesitate to borrow as fully adequate to express our belief in the continued existence of the soul. As the function of the prophet was largely ethical, and the function of the psalmist was primarily spiritual and religious, we should expect to find the latter more frequently speaking of the devout faith of the soul in the reality and blessedness, the completeness and glory of the life beyond this. And such is the fact, as seen in such precious and familiar words as these: "I shall be

satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel and after receive me to glory." "*Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thy Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*"

The last verses of this psalm, as we shall soon see, have a special and peculiar reference to Christ, and so catalogue the psalm among the Messianic and prophetic scriptures. The psalm is not like Ps. 110, which refers exclusively and solely to the coming Messiah, whose very language, as well as the testimony of Christ and his apostles, seems to forbid any other application. This psalm has in it much that grew out of the experience of the psalmist, and that is common to all of God's people whose lives are lived on a high level of religious faith and spirituality. It must be confessed that its language presents a standard and an ideal which are all too infrequently reached by Christians of our time, notwithstanding the superior light and privileges which we enjoy. The man who could truthfully give expression to his attainments in religious life and faith in these words would seem like a veritable spiritual giant, while the most of us would seem like pigmies at his side. To clothe our little faith, and feeble spiritual life, and puny experiences with the language of the

psalm would be like a little child attempting to put on the splendid jeweled dress of the queen, worn at a royal reception. The appearance of extravagance and overstatement in Scripture language is too often the result of the sad immaturity of our Christian experience. We apply to some remote saint of Bible times, or possibly interpret as only prophetic of the ideal person and life of the Messiah, words which ought to be the truthful and well-fitting expression of our every-day spiritual faith and joy, peace and life in God.

The Scriptures call all Christians "saints," all believers in Jesus Christ, all who openly profess to be living the religious life, and not the few who have been canonized by a very fallible church. We need to grow up to our God-given name, and to be developed to the descriptive language of the Bible, much of which, instead of applying only to Christ and to exceptional believers, should be universally applicable and should fittingly set forth the spirit, life, and experience of every child of God. The ignorant man who persisted in changing the last word of the line of the familiar hymn, and always singing it,

> Judge not the Lord by feeble saints,

was only uttering a necessary warning, if men would have correct views of God and religion.

How many of us are living such exalted expe-

riences that we can say, "I have no good outside of God, and all my delight is in his people"? How many of us find such richness and fullness and complete satisfaction in our religion that we can say, "*Jehovah is the portion of my territory and of my cup*," that is, He is my satisfying possession and the daily food by which I live? How many of us have that undisturbed faith in God, and that calm and peaceful trust in his wisdom and unchanging love amid the hardships, the disappointments, the losses, the sorrows of life, that we can ever sing, "*The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.*" How many of us are so steadfast, so unshaken, so loyal in our adherence to God and truth and duty, that amid the temptations to disobedience and widespread apostasy and neglect of covenant obligations we can affirm at all times, "*I have set Jehovah always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.*"

These descriptions of religious life and character were undoubtedly true of Christ, the Ideal Man, to the very letter. He did say, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." He did speak of the joy and the peace which he had in the Father, and which he longed earnestly to impart to men. He did submissively say, in an ordeal

more severe than any other son of man ever passed through, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." He did assert as the one supreme motive of his earthly life, "I must be about my Father's business."

All this language of the psalm was pre-eminently true of him who lived and loved in Galilee, and prophetic of his divine example for the world. But thus far the psalm was undoubtedly true in some sense of the man of God who wrote these words, and ought to be true of the spirit and life of every man of God who reads them. This is the beautiful picture of a righteous man, of a man whose heart is right, who has been brought into right relations with God and with his environment, who acknowledges his daily dependence upon the Infinite Spirit, and has ceased to worry and fret and chafe under the yoke of God's providences, in which sometimes the unyielding harness seems to be all sharp buckles, and not smooth bands.

The inspired man of God who wrote these words was David, who sang out of his own experience, and whose skillful fingers have touched and caused to vibrate so many of the chords of human life all down the ages. The psalm has always been ascribed to him. His name appears in the inscription, which, though not inspired, is as worthy of confidence as an infidel denial. Moreover, Peter and Paul have distinctly told us that David wrote

it, and we confidently accept their testimony. It was David's psalm, written by his wonderful pen, born out of his experience, throbbing with his life, ringing with his faith and joy and contentment, and bright with present and immortal hope.

It was David who confessed that he had no prosperity apart from God, and no real comfort apart from the fellowship of his people. It was David who refused to honor any other deities or be associated in their worship. It was David who declared that God was his satisfying portion and his inheritance, his landed estate and his meat and drink, his abiding and imperishable wealth and the daily nourishment of his soul, anticipating the words of Paul, "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's," anticipating the words of Savonarola: "What must not he possess who possesses the Possessor of all." It was David who looked out upon his earthly lot and declared it to be bright with the sunshine of God's love, and that his heritage was exceedingly fair to behold, reminding us of his other words, "Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Ah! that was what made his heritage so goodly. This land in which he dwelt was God's house for his body, and yonder soon would be God's house for his soul. It was David who acknowledged that it was God's wisdom that had guided him in his

choice, and had so illuminated his heart that in the darkness and silence of the night he could hear its words of instruction. It was David who proclaimed that he had entered into friendly alliance with Jehovah, as against the combined forces of evil in the world, that the Almighty was in front of him as his shield and at his right hand as his protector, aye, that he was his right hand, that God's right arm was his right arm ; that God was not a dream, or an abstraction, or a God afar off, but a real, living person, walking at his side, and therefore he should neither fall nor be felled, but amid the temptations and moral upheavals and shocking disasters of life he should stand unharmed, immovable, invincible, and having done all should stand. It was David who, in the strength of his faith and the gladness of his heart, looked out upon the victorious issue of life, and penetrating the mystery that shrouds life's end, the unseen and the unknown of death and the grave, calmly said, "My flesh also shall rest in hope," or in safety, as the Hebrew word means.

And was it not David who said also for himself in some true sense, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in the unseen world, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life ; in thy presence is fulness of joy ; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." This language, as has been said already, is evi-

dently a clear, emphatic, unmistakable declaration of his faith in the immortality of the soul. It was as if he had heard Christ, the Lord of life, say: "Because I live, ye shall live also," and his heart cried out in glad response, without a doubt or a fear, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

But we are taught by men chosen by Christ to receive his Spirit, who should lead them into all the truth, and should take of the things of Christ and show them unto them, that these words were to find a literal and more perfect and intended fulfillment in the resurrection of Jesus Christ centuries later, that the application to David was only partial and prophetic, and that David was conscious when he wrote the words that he was speaking not simply of his own immortality, but of that glorious and crowning event of Christ's manifestation on earth, which should be at the same time the irresistible proof of his divine character and mission, and the conclusive evidence of the great doctrine of the resurrection of us all.

It is sometimes maintained that the Messianic prophecies of the Psalms and of other books of the Old Testament are simply "idealizations" of David or Solomon, of some eminent character in Jewish history, and that the fact and expression of these "idealizations" naturally gave rise to the expectation that in the future some person, a superior king,

or a supreme sufferer, or both in one, would arise who should fulfill, that is, fill full or fill out, these pictures of the imagination; and so in the New Testament these "idealizations" are regarded as prophetic, as Messianic, and Christ is declared to be their adequate fulfillment and realization. This view is advanced and defended by Rev. C. A. Row, in "The Jesus of the Evangelists." He says of these Messianic ideas in the Psalms:

> They are chiefly either uttered by David or ascribed to him in his character of theocratic king. As such they contain utterances which are not strictly true of any human being. They may be described as David idealized. . . These idealizations therefore would naturally produce the effect of creating the expectation that there was a King yet future in whom they were to receive a more adequate realization. . . The larger proportion of the Messianic psalms contains delineations of the greatness and the holiness of the idealized David. But there are psalms which idealize David, or at any rate the author who composed them, as a sufferer. . . Both these species of psalms are directly referred to in the New Testament as prophetic. Their idealization is fulfilled in the character of the Jesus therein portrayed.

This theory presents a naturalistic interpretation of the Messianic utterances and of the origin and growth of the Messianic idea; but it eliminates largely, if not entirely, the supernatural element in what is called prophecy, so that prophecy is only a hope, a longing, a pleasant dream, a cherished ex-

pectation born of the imagination, and not a positive assurance and utterance based upon a divine illumination. Prophecy becomes no longer prophecy in the common acceptation of the word. It may be difficult to explain how prophets were made and what was the method of the operation of God's illuminating Spirit. Ideals of greatness and glory and possibly of suffering may be suggested by the Spirit of God, and there be kindled in the heart the expectation of a coming realization and fulfillment. David may have been idealized, his moral character, the events of his life, his kingly state, and his righteous and extended dominion. He himself may have given utterance to exalted views of personal character and sublime conceptions of life as lived in holy fellowship with God, such as were fully realized in Jesus Christ, and he may have cherished the fond expectation that some day they would have their living fulfillment. But all this would not be prophecy in the scriptural sense. Such a view falls very far short of an adequate interpretation of the Messianic scriptures. It fails to account for the positive predictive character of many of them and for the numerous particular specifications which were literally fulfilled in Christ. Prophecy is vastly more than idealized history or idealized biography. So those believed, who, moved by the Spirit of God, originally uttered it, and so those also believed who, instructed

by the same divine Spirit, have interpreted it for us.

The Apostle Peter, in that wonderful sermon on the day of Pentecost, which carried conviction and faith to the hearts of a great multitude, among whom were the crucifiers of our Lord, speaking of Christ's resurrection, said: "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it [not possible because of God's plan and purpose which he had revealed in his word]. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face [the quotation beginning with the eighth verse of the psalm]; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. [Peter quotes from the Septuagint version.] Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David [that is, listen to me candidly while I show to you 'without fear of being thought deficient in any just respect to his memory,' that these words could not have referred to David, because he was not raised from the dead, and therefore did see corruption], that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us

unto this day. [His sepulchre on Mount Zion was well known at that time and remained until the time of Hadrian.] Therefore being a prophet [being inspired of God to speak his will, as well as to foresee and declare coming events], and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne ; he, seeing this before, spake [intelligently and with a clear prophetic understanding] of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses."

Peter, speaking upon these verses of the psalm, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, distinctly affirms that they had their ultimate reference to Christ and their literal fulfillment in him and his resurrection from the dead ; in other words, that they were a divine prophecy of this glorious fact of our Christian faith, and that David, being a prophet of God, that is, divinely inspired, knew what he was discoursing upon when he uttered them, and was conscious of their prophetic meaning, knowing that God had sworn that he would raise up his lineal descendant to sit upon his throne ; he seeing this before, that is, foreseeing this very event, spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that his soul should not be left in sheol, neither should his flesh see corruption. Indeed, reasoned Peter, David could not

have been speaking of himself, for he shared in the common lot of humanity. He died and was buried; his body was given over to corruption, and with his sepulchre we are all familiar. But not so with this Jesus. His body saw no corruption. God, by his almighty power, snatched it from decay, in accordance with his own prophetic declaration. He raised him from the dead, and we are all witnesses of the sublime fact.

We are simply unfolding the argument of the inspired apostle, which was the means of converting three thousand hostile Jews, to whom the Scriptures had been familiar from their childhood, into open believers in Jesus as their foretold Messiah.

Lange insists upon the double reference of the words of the psalmist in the following comment:

> But how are we, in accordance with the opinion of the apostle, to understand the prophecy of David psychologically? Did David, who speaks in the first person, and therefore really seems to refer to himself, in truth speak, not in his own name, but in that of the Messiah? The psalm itself does not furnish the least support for such a view; nor indeed does Peter maintain that David, omitting every reference to his own person, spoke exclusively of Christ. It is quite consistent with the words and the meaning of the apostle to assume that David certainly expressed more immediately his personal hope of life, founded as it was on his close communion with God; but Peter as certainly asserts emphatically that at the same time David, by virtue of the illumination of the Spirit of God which was in him, expressed a hope which, in its full sense and meaning, was

to be fulfilled, not in himself, but in that Anointed One of God, who was promised to him and who was his descendant and a successor on his throne.

The Apostle Paul, also, who was a profound student of the Hebrew Scriptures, to whom no modern interpreter can hold a candle, and was also the recipient of the gift of divine inspiration, in like manner quotes this psalm, and also the second Psalm, in addressing the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia, as referring to the resurrection, the exaltation to glory, the eternal existence, the deliverance from corruption, the full Messiahship of Jesus. Let us recall the remarkable passage found in Acts 13 : 26, *seq.:* "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him. [It was blind ignorance of the Hebrew Scriptures that led to the crucifixion of Jesus. It is to-day a similar ignorance that refuses to see their application to Christ.] And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that *was written of him*, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre. But God raised him from the dead: and he was seen many days of

them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.[1] Wherefore he saith also in another psalm,[2] Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption."

"The main idea of the clause is," says Doctor Hackett, "that David, like other men, had but one generation of contemporaries, that he accomplished for that his allotted work, and then yielded to the universal law which consigns the race to death."

The words of this psalm, therefore, says Paul, were not fulfilled in David, but in Jesus, whom God raised from the dead in a miraculous manner, and who therefore saw no corruption, whose ministry was neither terminated nor interrupted by his

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[1] Isa. 55 : 3. [2] Ps. 16.

death, was not confined to his own generation, but was predetermined to be for all generations of men down to the end of time, and who by his resurrection from the dead was seen to be invested with the power of an endless life, and therefore is able to save to the uttermost all who put their trust in him.

Paul's statements forcibly remind us of Peter's course of argument, but contain an entirely independent use of the language of the psalm. Both find in it a clear and unmistakable prophecy of the resurrection of the Messiah; but their point of view is different, and their reference to the foretold fact of Christ's resurrection is for different purposes. Peter shows that on account of the prophecy, since the divine purpose cannot fail, it was not possible that Christ should be holden by death, he must have risen from the grave; while Paul, accepting the resurrection of Christ as evidence of his Messiahship, declares that through him and the perpetuity of his existence, the grace and forgiveness of God and eternal life were to be evermore offered to men. Moreover, it may be added in the words of Doctor Alexander:

> That one discourse is not compiled or copied from the other is sufficiently apparent from the difference of form, Paul quoting a single verse, and that only in part, of the four which Peter had made use of, and connecting that one with a passage in Isaiah, not alluded to by Peter, while he

passed by the latter's kindred argument derived from Ps. 110. All this goes to show the independence of the two apostles and their two discourses, but at the same time their exact agreement in the exposition of a Messianic prophecy.

It is pertinent to remark in this connection, that among prophecies setting forth the person and mission of the coming Messiah, a fact so all-important as his resurrection from the dead would not be omitted. We should expect that it would have a distinct and conspicuous place in the prophetic picture, such as it does have in this psalm and in Ps. 2. It is impossible to overestimate the effect upon the minds of the early disciples of their belief in the actual resurrection of their crucified Master, or to overestimate the significance of the fact in the Christian system. The crucifixion of Christ must have seemed to his followers an unspeakable catastrophe. Hope, courage, and faith itself must have been buried with him who was laid in Joseph's tomb. It was his resurrection, seen in the light of divine prophecy and verified by the repeated test of their senses, that revived their hope, restored and enlarged their faith, and that offers to-day the only adequate reason for their heroic propagandism and the marvelous victories of the religion of Christ in the early, and also in the later, centuries. Westcott has well said:

If we measure what seemed to be the hopeless ignominy of the catastrophe by which his work was ended, and the

divine prerogatives which are claimed for him, not *in spite of*, but *in consequence of*, that suffering and shame, we shall feel the utter hopelessness of reconciling the fact, and that triumphant deduction from it, without some intervening fact as certain as Christ's passion and glorious enough to transfigure its sorrow.

The brilliant paragraph of Farrar is not a rhetorical overstatement:

At the moment when Christ died, nothing could have seemed more abjectly weak, more pitifully hopeless, more absolutely doomed to scorn and extinction and despair, than the church which he had founded. It numbered but a handful of weak followers, of which the boldest had denied his Lord with blasphemy and the most devoted had forsaken him and fled. They were poor, they were ignorant, they were hopeless. They could not claim a single synagogue or a single sword. If they spoke their own language, it bewrayed them by its mongrel dialect; if they spoke the current Greek, it was despised as a miserable *patois*. So feeble were they and insignificant, that it would have looked like foolish partiality to prophesy for them the limited existence of a Galilean sect. How was it that these dull and ignorant men, with their cross of wood, triumphed over the deadly fascinations of sensual mythologies, conquered kings and their armies, and overcame the world? What was it that thus caused strength to be made perfect out of abject weakness? There is one, and only one, possible answer, the resurrection from the dead. All this vast revolution was due to the power of Christ's resurrection.

The importance and significance of Christ's resurrection are not a whit less to-day than at the first, as proclaiming Christ's divine nature, giving

validity to his claims, authority to his teachings, and efficacy to his atoning death, and establishing the supernatural character of the Christian religion. It is an essential fact in the Christian faith and an essential factor in its influence and its permanence. We are not surprised that the inspired psalmist foresaw and foretold it. We should have been surprised if so momentous an event had been overlooked in his prophetic message.

It is only necessary to add that the title, "thine Holy One," is peculiar. Peter and Paul leave us in no slightest doubt as to its reference to Christ. We are reminded also of the language of the angel of the annunciation to Mary: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."[1] And of the expression in Acts 4 : 27: "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together"; and of the application of the same title to Christ in Acts 3 : 14: "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you."

This psalm, then, is strongly Messianic. It foretold the crowning fact of Christ's ~~early~~ manifesta-

[1] Luke 1 : 35.

tion, which is the supporting pillar of the whole Christian system. A recent writer has said:

Christianity in its ultimate analysis consists of two elements, a person and a fact, Jesus and the resurrection. Belief in these and confession of these are the condition of salvation.[1] The resurrection is the basis of our acceptance,[2] the ground of our justification,[3] the source, as it is the standard, of Christian living,[4] the highest Christian attainment,[5] the measure of God's power in the saints.[6] Without it there is no Christianity and no salvation. "If Christ be not raised your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins."

And he might add—without it inspired prophecy is yet unfulfilled and inspired history is false. But we sing to-day without a tremor or a doubt:

From the dark grave he rose,
The mansion of the dead;
And thence his mighty foes
In glorious triumph led:
Up through the sky the Conqueror rode,
And reigns on high the Saviour God.

From thence he'll quickly come,
His chariot will not stay,
And bear our spirits home
To realms of endless day:
There shall we see his lovely face,
And ever be in his embrace.

"In thy presence, O Christ, is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore."

[1] Rom. 10 : 9. [2] Rom. 4 : 24. [3] Rom. 4 : 25.
[4] Col. 3 : 1. [5] Phil. 3 : 10. [6] Eph. 1 : 19, 20.

CHAPTER V

PSALM LXXII

V

Psalm LXXII A NOTICEABLE feature of the psalms which we have thus far considered, has been that they have been quoted in the New Testament as referring to Christ, either by Christ himself or by his apostles, or by both. This fact has been accepted as conclusive proof of their Messianic character. If we believe in the inspiration of the writers of the New Testament, that in their statements of facts and arguments in favor of the Messiahship of Jesus drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures they were under the guidance of God's Spirit, and if we believe in the divine authority of Christ and his exemption from error, their interpretation of the prophetic passages removes all uncertainty, and leaves no room for question or discussion. But if there are interpreters who do not regard the testimony of Christ and his apostles as authoritative and final, who think them liable to errors of interpretation, of statement, and of doctrine, we occupy entirely different grounds.

The question then is not, What did Christ and his apostles say and teach? but, Is what they said and taught worth anything? Should it have any weight

and value? And if their teaching in respect to the Messianic prophecies is to be discounted, how can we put any confidence in their teaching in respect to any truth of God or religion? Such a position seems to take the bottom out of Christianity itself. Christianity as a system rests upon the person of Christ and the teachings of Christ and his inspired apostles. As believers in Christianity as a divine and authoritative religion, we can have no use, therefore, for interpreters who question the very basis of its authority. As establishing the truthfulness of the Messianic prophecies we regard the testimony of Christ and his apostles as final and absolutely conclusive.

But some wise and devout students of the Bible have gone so far as to say that only those passages in the Old Testament are to be regarded as referring to Christ which are so referred by the writers of the New Testament, as if it were to be expected, or were even possible, for the followers of Christ to gather up and repeat in their brief writings all references to the Messiah in the sacred Scriptures of a people in whose souls the Messianic hope was an ever-present reality and which was ever finding expression in their history, their ritual of worship, their psalms of faith, their religious literature, their record of daily life, and their anticipations of national greatness and glory.

Pressensé has truly said :

It would be having an incomplete conception of prophecy to see it nowhere but in the oracles of the prophets. It circulated in every part of Judaism, it flowed from every institution, as from every event. The Mosaic system was, as a whole, the figure of that which was to come. Thus, even when there flourished no prophet, prophecy did not cease for a moment to cause its voice to be heard. Even in silence it spoke by the worship, by the altar, by the blood of the victims.

This sublime national hope, which entered into the deepest life and the solemn public worship of the Jewish people, all pervasive and indestructible, would naturally and inevitably flash out everywhere in their annals and prophecies. It was the one blessed reality of their lives toward which thought and hope, desire and worship all converged. Said the late Dr. Hackett:

It is unreasonable to suppose that the comparatively few passages which are cited in the New Testament from the Old, as having been spoken of Christ and as fulfilled in him, exhaust the number of such passages. The New Testament represents the Redeemer as the great subject of the ancient economy; and if those types and predictions only have reference to him which are cited and applied in that manner, it would be difficult to see how the Hebrew Scriptures could claim such a character of predominant reference to the Christian dispensation. It should be admitted that other portions also, which the Saviour and the apostles have not interpreted for us, may have a Messianic import. We impose all proper safeguards on the principle if we insist that the language of the passages in question be clearly such as

to indicate their applicability to Christ and his kingdom, and that the views concerning him and his work deduced from them harmonize entirely with the general tenor of the Old Testament revelations on this subject, which are unquestionable in their character. With these precautions we may safely understand such passages as Messianic, though we have not the express authority of the New Testament writers for such an interpretation.

The seventy-second Psalm is one of these unquoted Messianic passages. There is language in the New Testament which is strikingly similar to some of the verses of the psalm. But the psalm is never used as an argument by New Testament writers in favor of the character, mission, and reign of Christ. There is no quotation from it whatever to show how Christ and his apostles regarded it. A plain quotation and reference to Christ would have been proof positive of its Messianic import. On the other hand, the omission of any quotation is no argument against it, if there are manifest indications in the psalm itself that it referred to the coming Messiah, and the character, the extent, and the glory of his kingdom.

Cheyne, in "Jewish Religious Life After the Exile," does not hesitate to speak of this as "another Messianic psalm," though he does not admit that it has any personal application to Christ. He uses the term "Messiah" in a different sense from that in which it is ordinarily employed. "The truth is that the Messiah is but a poetic embodi-

ment of the Davidic royalty, and the Davidic royalty, in the absence of any real political interest, is but the representative of the Jewish people." He takes exception to the striking remark of R. H. Hutton, that the Jewish prophets had learned that "There must be between the Father and human nature some being lowly as the latter, perfect as the former, whose kingliness would not consist in mere righteous power, but in righteous humility."

It may be said, in passing, that Jewish interpreters have had no doubt as to this personal Messianic application. The Targum paraphrases the first verse of the psalm in this manner: "O God, give the knowledge of thy judgments to the King Messiah, and thy justice to the son of King David." And the Midrash Tehillim says of the king here spoken of, "This is the King Messiah."

But it is the character of the psalm itself, its remarkable language, its wonderful description of the coming king and his kingdom, its beautiful imagery as to the beneficence and universal extent of his reign that determines its reference and application. The authorship of the psalm does not affect its interpretation. It is ascribed to Solomon, and this is one of two psalms that bear his name, the other being the one hundred and twenty-seventh. There is no good argument against its Solomonic authorship. Hupfeld thinks it belongs to a later time, but offers no proof of his opinion.

Delitzsch, on the other hand, contends that we find here the marks both of Solomon's style and of Solomon's time; that the expressions are arranged for the most part in distichs, like the Proverbs, that the character of the poetry is reflective, that it is rich in images borrowed from the world of nature.

It is possible that the psalm found a partial fulfillment in the reign of Solomon, especially in the earlier and more prosperous part of his reign. The history tells us that:

> Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt; they brought presents and served Solomon all the days of his life. . . All the earth sought to Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his heart. . . And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions. . . And she said to the king . . . Blessed be the Lord thy God which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice. And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as those which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.[1]

This language bears some resemblance to the language of the psalm, and if the psalm was written later, may have furnished a historic basis. "Be this as it may, we have here," says Perowne, "an-

[1] 1 Kings 4 : 21; 10 : 24; 10 : 1, 9, 10.

other instance of the way in which prophecy rooted itself in the Jewish soil, how it looked first to the present and then to the future, first to the type and then to the antitype." Though in the judgment of candor the psalm may have had only a partial application in the reign of Solomon, it harmonized with that more than with the reign of any other Jewish monarch.

But the contents of the psalm make it impossible to understand it as limited to the character and reign of any earthly king. Tholuck says: "It would exceed the highest flight of poetic fancy to apply it in that manner." The psalm is too large to be accepted as the description of the little glory and pomp of any historic reality. Its language is too spiritual, too grand, too lofty, too far-reaching, to be limited to the proudest empire that the world has ever seen or that the annals of history have preserved any record of. The portrait of the king is glorious beyond any human original. The beneficence of his reign and the happy and prosperous condition of his subjects find no counterpart this side of the predicted millennium. The extent and the duration of his dominion are as wide as the universe and lasting as eternity.

As another has said: "The king described here is to be acknowledged in all the earth, and his dominion to endure forever. The traits of character also which are to distinguish him declare his

superiority to any human ruler, and the blessings which he is to confer no power less than the Highest can bestow on its subjects."

No candid reader can peruse this psalm and contemplate the picture here presented without exclaiming spontaneously: "O King, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Thy kingdom is righteousness and peace and joy, and is from everlasting to everlasting. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

The psalm may be divided into four parts and a doxology, though the inspired writer is so full of the thought of the prosperous and glorious reign of the Messiah that he constantly returns upon himself and resumes and unfolds still further the thought that is swelling within his breast.

In the first four verses is set forth the righteous and peaceful character of the coming kingdom of the Messiah. "*Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's Son.*" How appropriate the language as applied to David's greater Son, before whose glory all other descendants disappear and are forgotten. His throne shall be established in righteousness, which is the foundation of all good government, human or divine. What men need to-day as the true relief of all social evils is not paternalism, as it is called, about which we hear so much, but righteousness and

equity in legislation and administration. "*He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.*" This shall bring about a return of peace and prosperity to the people. Then "*The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.*" The last word qualifies both members of the sentence. It is peace by righteousness. All places, high and low, shall yield a harvest of peace, because they have been sown with the seeds of righteousness. It is not charity but equity, not paternalism but righteousness, that men most need in human government, and that will characterize the coming reign of the Messiah. All classes shall fare alike. There shall be no partiality and no distinction. The rights of all shall be sacredly protected. "*He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.*" All oppression and wrong shall come to an end, whether it be of the poor by the rich or of the rich by the poor, because the oppressors themselves shall come to an end. There will not be enough of any one of them left to oppress anybody or anything. They shall be broken in pieces.

The next three verses (5–7) set forth the endless duration of the kingdom of the Messiah, and at the same time its rapid and beneficent growth and its blessed effect upon the people. "*They shall fear thee* [that is, the divine Son] *as long as the*

sun and moon endure, throughout all generations." "The sun and moon are mentioned here," it has been said, "as witnesses to an everlasting order, and, as it were, figures of eternity compared with the fleeting, dying generations of men." So long as the solar system stands, so long as suns shall rise and set, so long as moons shall wax and wane, so long as the generations of the human race shall survive, the name of Christ shall be reverenced.

But though all power is his in heaven and in earth, so that he could break in pieces the cruel oppressor, his victories shall be won by the irresistible might of his own gentleness and grace. "*He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth.*" This language reminds us of those other words which have not always been remembered by men, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

As gentle as the showers from heaven, and as perceptibly effective as when they fall upon the fields over which the scythe has gone, and quicken their apparent barrenness and deadness into an abundance of verdant life, so shall be the refreshing and life-giving influence of the Messiah's reign. As another has said, "The gracious influence of the monarch and of his righteous sway is strikingly compared to the bountiful shower which freshens the withered herbage and changes the brown, bare, parched, dusty surface, as by a touch

of magic, into one mass of verdure and bloom." This suggestive figure, especially suggestive in the dry, tropical Syrian climate, pictures to us the beauty and loveliness of Christ's reign in human hearts and in human society. It brings life, moral and spiritual beauty, out of apparent death and unfruitfulness. It changes the whole condition of things. For "*In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.*" A righteous kingdom will make righteous subjects. The best human governments can only protect those who are good. But this new government of the Messiah is to be composed of regenerated men. It is to convert bad citizens into good citizens, and to rest upon the renewed hearts and refashioned characters of its subjects. And so it is that under the Messiah's reign "mercy and truth are met together" in holy wedlock, and "righteousness and peace shall kiss each other" in loving and lasting embrace.

The next four verses (8–11) set forth in Oriental language the universal territorial extent of the kingdom of Christ, and the subjection of all powers and of all lands to him. "*He shall have dominion also from sea to sea,*" from the neighboring Mediterranean to that supposed encircling sea beyond the utmost verge of the habitable continent, "*and from the river unto the ends of the earth,*" from the Euphrates unto the remotest boundaries of all lands.

"*They that dwell in the wilderness*," the wild, uncivilized, untamed savages of the desert, "*shall bow before him*," and any who oppose him shall be completely subdued. "*The kings of Tarshish and of the isles*," *i. e.*, Spain and the remote islands of the west, "the empire on the shores of the Mediterranean, the great maritime and commercial countries of the world," "*shall bring presents*" in return for blessings received, and "*the kings of Sheba and Seba*," *i. e.*, Arabia and Ethiopia in the far south, "*shall offer gifts*" of tribute and of homage. "*Yea, all kings* [whoever they are, and however powerful] *shall fall down before him; all nations* [however mighty and remote] *shall serve him.*" His dominion shall be complete and world-wide. Of what earthly monarch has it ever been, or will it ever be, true? Of whom can such language be employed without the grossest exaggeration, except of him who is declared to be "King of kings and Lord of lords."

But we are not allowed to forget the character of the reign of the Messiah, his personal exaltation and glory, the fruitfulness and blessedness of his kingdom, and the eternal splendor which shall rest upon his royal name. All these are set forth in fresh and striking language in the next six verses of the psalm (12–17). "*For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper* [but God]. *He shall spare the poor*

and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence; and precious shall their blood be in his sight." The sad, the lonely, the outcast, the helpless, the oppressed, the wronged, shall find in him the gracious Sympathizer, the mighty Protector, the divine Saviour, and the righteous Avenger.

"*And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba; prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised.*" His reign shall not be terminated by his death. His dynasty shall be without end. He shall have no successor on his throne. The tribute of the world shall be forever laid at his feet. When we pray "Thy kingdom come," we are praying for the Messiah, and his glorious and perpetual reign. When we sing "All hail the power of Jesus' name," we are giving him daily adoration and praise.

Oh, how lovely shall be the sight! How blessed shall be the realization of this sublime and thrilling prophecy! "*There shall be an abundance* [not a handful] *of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon.*" As another has said:

> The idea is that the whole country shall be one bright sunny picture of gladness and fertility, the cornfields being seen not only in the valleys, but rising terrace above terrace, along the mountain-sides, till they reach their summits. The rustling of the cornfields in the wind is compared to the

rustling of the cedars of Lebanon, so thick shall the corn stand, so rich shall be the harvest.

"*They shall flourish forth from the city like the grass of the earth,*" going forth on every side from its heated air, its stifled streets, its crowded homes into God's open fields, where heaven's healthful breezes blow, and no smoky atmosphere conceals the blue by day or the brilliance of the stars by night. The whole land shall be covered by a vigorous and happy population. We sometimes think now, that if the slums of the cities could be emptied into the country, and their contents spread out and purified and sweetened by the absorbent earth, and the pure air, and the healing sunshine, the millennium would begin to dawn, and social life would take on an appearance of health and permanence which it has not to-day, and civil government be purged of its elements of corruption and decay. Are we not told that the name of the Messiah "*shall endure forever*"? The permanence of his government shall never be disturbed or endangered. "*His name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.*" The blessedness shall be reciprocal. The joy of the people shall be in their righteous and benevolent and glorious Sovereign; and the joy of the Messiah shall be in his righteous and loving and obedient people. Then will Isaiah's prophecy be fulfilled:

"He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

Then follows a splendid doxology (ver. 18, 19), the outburst of religious feeling at the complete triumph of the Messiah's kingdom, its wonderful achievements and prosperity, wrought by the hand of the Almighty, and its world-wide renown. "*Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name forever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen.*"

The psalm concludes with a statement (ver. 20), probably added by another hand, which seems to have been placed originally at the close of a collection of psalms, of which this was the last, and the most of which were composed by David—"*The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.*"

As has already been said, this psalm has missed being quoted in the New Testament, but its contents so striking, so sublime, so supernatural, and its language so beautiful, so spiritual, so glorious, so far-reaching, forbid its literal reference to King Solomon, and compel its application to one King and one kingdom, viz, the Messiah King of divine prophecy, and that kingdom which we are told is to result from the purification and the unification of all nations through the triumph of the gospel, when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

Rev. Stanley Leathes, in "The Witness of the Old Testament to Christ," has these convincing words as to the spiritual and Messianic application of the psalm:

> From this seventy-second Psalm let us take the words, "His name shall endure forever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed." What is it that they say? If taken literally, which is all I ask, it is simply absurd, either to refer them to the reign of Solomon, or to suppose that David could refer to him in them. He knew that his son would be mortal like himself; he knew that the duration of the material heavens would outlast the physical lifetime of Solomon. These were broad facts, of which he could not possibly be ignorant; neither could he believe that men should be blessed, or should bless themselves, in him. . . We may therefore justly maintain that the blessing anticipated for Solomon, and for Israel and mankind through him, was more than a material or secular blessing. From the nature of the case it could not but be. We are bound to measure the significance of David's language by the known tenor of his thoughts, to interpret his words by the plain and obvious facts of his life. And, thus interpreted, the seventy-second Psalm . . . affords the clearest evidence, that with the divine promise of a son who should build the house of God, *there was associated in the mind of David the hope of a greater and more glorious king*, of whose dominion it shall not be vain and meaningless hyperbole to say that it should extend from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

You will notice that the picture presented is not the picture of heaven. The scene is laid here upon

the earth. The sun and the moon still hold their places in the heavens. There seem to be still God's needy ones to be relieved and delivered, and still wrongs to be righted and oppressions to be avenged.

It is not exactly the picture of the triumphant church of Christ, with its worship, its spiritual fellowship, its accepted faith, and its songs of redeeming love, although this may be said to be included as a necessary means and vital part of that changed earthly condition which the psalm foretells.

But it seems to be the revelation of a new social order, of a moral progress and revolution among men and nations, of which reformers and philanthropists and statesmen and sociologists sometimes dream, when social evils shall be well-nigh exterminated, when the rights of all men shall be protected, when political corruption shall be unknown, when the government shall be administered in righteousness and equity, and the people in relation to it and to one another shall be actuated by like principles of righteousness, and charity and great prosperity and abundance of peace shall everywhere prevail; in a word, it is the realization of the kingdom of God on earth, for the coming of which Christ taught his disciples to pray, the conditions of membership in which he laid down in the Sermon on the Mount, and which he set forth in the New Testament as the millennial reign of

the Messiah among all nations, in the homes, the families, the business and social life, the pursuits, the legislation, the civil institutions of men, that whole system of relations and duties which grow out of the social organism, into which we are born and in which we live.

As has been said, it is not the church or churches as ecclesiastical organizations, that are here portrayed ; yet it is these churches of Christ, with their perpetual proclamation of truth and intercession with God for the renewing power of the divine Spirit, their constant inculcation of right principles, and their mighty, molding influence upon character and life, the continual holding forth of the lofty personal and social ideals found only in the gospel, their unceasing activities in all directions, including their aggressive missionary operations, which reach out to the ends of the earth—I say it is these churches of Christ, as they embody his spirit and follow his commands, that are the necessary means in bringing about that changed social order which the psalmist vividly foretells as a future realization.

The new social order will not come until the personal units of life are brought under the influence of the converting Spirit of God and his enlightening truth. You cannot have a regenerated society until the men who compose it are themselves regenerated. The divine leaven is necessary for the

leavening of the whole lump. Legislation is good, inasmuch as it registers and makes effective any advance in moral sentiment. Discussion, agitation, instruction along sociological lines, are of value as they hold up the true ideals and point out the correct means of their attainment; if they do not, they are so much wasted energy. The divine kingdom will come on earth only by the divine methods. The new social order will result only from the new individual disposition and life. The church of Jesus Christ has, in its divine message of truth and its essential missionary spirit, the secret of all permanent social progress, and of the reorganization of the world.

Dr. James S. Dennis, in his able work, "Christian Missions and Social Progress," says:

> Christianity being sociological in its scope, Christian missions must be so considered, for their one purpose is to propagate Christianity, and bring it into touch with the individual heart and with the associate life of man. It seems impossible to deny to missions a social scope of immense significance. They deal with the individual, and through him reach society. If they change the religious convictions and the moral character of the man, they put him at once into a new attitude toward the domestic, civil, economic, and ethical aspects of society. If they put the individual right with God, they will necessarily transform his attitude toward man into harmony with Christian teaching. They introduce also new institutions into the social life of mankind—not simply new ecclesiastical organizations, but new educational and philanthropic movements, and they also

plant the germs of new political and industrial ideals, and open a new realm of intellectual and religious thought, which is focused in a wonderful way upon a new conception of liberty and a purer and nobler social life.

"Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's Son"; let Christ reign in the hearts of all citizens, let his Spirit "come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth"; then shall the kingdom of heaven be among us; then the righteous shall multiply and flourish in every land; then there shall be a universal reign of personal holiness and civic righteousness and peace so long as the moon endureth. This is the prophetic vision and the glorious promise contained in the psalm.

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run:
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

For him shall endless prayer be made,
And praises throng to crown his head,
His name like sweet perfume shall rise
With every morning sacrifice.

People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on his love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on his name.

Blessings abound where'er he reigns;
The prisoner leaps to loose his chains;

The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.

Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honors to our King ;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen !

CHAPTER VI

PSALM XLV

VI

Psalm XLV This psalm is altogether unique. There is nothing like it among all the other psalms. It appears to be, and it undoubtedly is, a marriage song, an epithalamium of great beauty and purity. It was undoubtedly composed to celebrate the marriage of a Jewish king with a royal bride, apparently of foreign birth. This was evidently its primary purpose and application. It was as when England's poet laureate celebrated the nuptials of the prince of Wales and the coming of Denmark's worthy princess into the royal family of Great Britain; only the language of the psalm is more beautiful than anything that Tennyson, though in some respects the greatest poet of this century, ever wrote.

The inspired psalmist evidently felt himself carried aloft by his theme, and in some way specially qualified for the delicate and joyous service which he was prompted to undertake. In the opening verse of the psalm he declares: "*My heart is inditing* [or overflowing with] *a good matter: I am speaking; my work is for a King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.*" This verse contains the dedication of the psalm to the royal person who is

its subject, and also claims that it was truly inspired by him. As another has paraphrased the language: "My poem, the work or creation of my imagination, is for a king, is dedicated to and inspired by him."

The authorship of the psalm is unknown, and its title is very perplexing. The word "Shoshannim" means *lilies*, and probably denotes some musical instrument, which was called by that name, and bore some resemblance to that flower in its shape. Some have understood the word to apply, in part, to the subject of the psalm, the royal bride, the lily being taken as the emblem of pure and lovely womanhood, especially at the time of its espousals. The latter part of the title is eminently appropriate. It is "a song of love," of pure and holy love, human and also, as will be made evident, divine.

There is great diversity of opinion as to the primary and contemporary reference of the psalm. The oldest and most generally accepted theory is that it refers to the marriage of Solomon with the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. But Hupfeld, Hitzig, Delitzsch, and others, take different views from this, and from each other, and seek in various directions to find some historic event to which the psalm can be appropriately applied. It is not necessary to explain these views, for the reasons urged for their support do not seem to be con-

clusive, but rather conjectural and open to serious objections. Indeed, the reference to Solomon and his marriage to Pharaoh's daughter is not absolutely certain, but only a probable interpretation in the minds of those who hold the view.

One strong reason urged against it is, as the late Prof. O. S. Stearns has said, "the martial character of the reign which the psalmist pictures, combined with the absence of any reference to Egypt." In the third, fourth, and fifth verses we read these words, addressed to the king: "*Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.*"

Solomon could hardly be called a warlike king. His reign was rather distinguished for its peace and luxury. It may be that the psalmist blended the local picture with the prophetic picture, and saw in vision the mighty triumphs of the Messiah King, as like a warrior he should march on from victory to victory, and his enemies should fall before his irresistible power. This portraiture of the coming Messiah is not unusual in the psalms and prophets, and this blending of history and prophecy, of the present and the future, of the earthly and the spiritual, of the visible reign of the earthly king and

the blessed triumphs of King Immanuel, is by no means a strange occurrence. It was so easy for the prophet to expand the little historic incident into the large, rich, and glorious description of the power and splendor and world-wide dominion of the King that was to be.

At any rate, it may be said that this psalm fits into the experience of Solomon, and his marriage to Pharaoh's daughter, and the characteristics of his reign, better than into anything else. Perowne has said :

> On the whole, the general character of the psalm, describing as it does the majesty and persuasive eloquence of the king, the splendor of his appearance and of his palace, and the hopes which he raised for the future, is such as to make it more justly applicable to Solomon than to any other of the Jewish monarchs, so far as we are acquainted with their fortunes. Nor is it necessarily an objection to this view, that the monarch of the psalm is spoken of as a warrior, while Solomon was peculiarly "a man of peace." Something must be allowed to poetry. [And he might have added, as I have said, to the spirit and nature of prophecy.] An extended dominion would naturally be associated with ideas of conquest. And, with the recollection of his father's exploits fresh in his mind, the poet could not but regard warlike virtues as essential to the glory of the son. Besides, Solomon himself does not seem to have been deficient in military spirit.

It should be said that Dean Stanley found in this psalm simply a reference to King Solomon, and no reference whatever to the Messiah King,

though he appears to have done it in defiance of the obvious translation of the original Hebrew, and of the distinct reference of the psalm to Christ in the New Testament. On the other hand, another able English interpreter, Sadler, in an elaborate comparison of the language of the psalm with the history of Solomon and of Christ, in parallel columns, has undertaken to show that its reference is exclusively to Christ and not at all to Solomon. In this view he follows the great Church Fathers. He says:

> A very cursory examination will serve to convince the reader that if this psalm be written of Solomon, it must have been written as a satire. There is not a single image employed by the poet, the reality of which, when applied to Solomon, does not miserably fail. . . There is not the smallest historical evidence for connecting this psalm with Solomon.

The middle view is undoubtedly the true one, and is taken by almost all modern interpreters, viz, that while this psalm did have a local reference, though scholars are not entirely agreed as to what it was, it also pointed forward to Christ, his personal character and reign, his kingly glory and power, and to the beauty and excellence of his church, which was to be his spiritual bride, and also to the multiplication and increasing influence of his disciples, by whom his name and his fame should be spread abroad in all the earth. It is a

beautiful, significant, Oriental use of language, and as will be seen, is entirely in harmony with other passages of Scripture.

In studying prophecy it is wise to remember the profoundly philosophical remark of Doctor Arnold:

> Every prophecy has, according to the very definition of the word, a double sense; it has, if I may venture so to speak, two authors, the one human, the other divine.

The admirable paragraph of Perowne is worthy of quotation. After speaking of the primary reference of the psalm to Solomon, he adds:

> But a greater than Solomon is here. Evident as it is that much of the language of the poem is only properly applicable to the circumstances of the royal nuptials which occasioned it, it is no less evident that much of it greatly transcends them. The outward glory of Solomon was but a type and a foreshadowing of a better glory to be revealed. Israel's true king was not David or Solomon, but One of whom they, at the best, were only faint and transient images. A righteous One was yet to come, who should indeed rule in truth and equity, who should fulfill all the hopes which one human monarch after another, however fair the promise of his reign, had disappointed, and whose kingdom, because it was a righteous kingdom, should endure forever. Such a ruler would, indeed, be the vicegerent of God. In such an one, and by such an one, God would reign. He would be of the seed of David, and yet more glorious than all his fellows; human, and yet above men. It was because of this wonderfully close and real relation be-

tween God and man—a relation which the true king would visibly symbolize—that the psalmist could address him as God. In him God and man would in some mysterious manner meet. This, perhaps, he did see; more than this he could not see. The mystery of the incarnation was not yet revealed. But David knew that God had made man to be but little short of divine.[1] And he and others, full of hopes, the very greatness of which made them indistinct, uttered them in words that went far beyond themselves.

In support of this Messianic import and application of the psalm the following reasons may be presented, which taken together can leave no doubt in the mind.

First, it may be said that this is the most ancient and almost unanimous interpretation. Jews and Christians are agreed. Aben-Ezra says: "This psalm treats of David, or rather of his son Messiah, for that is his name,[2] 'And David my servant shall be their prince forever.'" The Chaldee paraphrast on the second verse writes: "Thy beauty, O King Messiah, is greater than that of the sons of men." Kimchi and Mendelssohn so refer it. This interpretation is not a modern or a Christian discovery. It is the ancient tradition of Hebrew scholarship.

Secondly, it may be remarked that the place of this psalm in the sacred Hebrew Psalter is evidence that it was more than a song of human love. I do

[1] Ps. 8 : 5. [2] Ezek. 34 : 24.

not speak depreciatingly of human affection. The relation between true husband and wife is sacred, and is of divine appointment. The domestic tie and the domestic joy are the highest on earth. The words "home" and "family" stand next to "heaven" in their holy significance. The marriage of two souls, who have been bound together by the cords of a pure and unchanging affection, is one of the most solemn as well as joyous transactions that can enter into human life, and has been thought worthy by Christ himself to symbolize the relation between him and his people. It makes no difference whether that union be consummated in the royal family or among the humblest subjects, in ivory palaces or under a thatched roof. The rite may be equally sacred, and the union of hearts equally pure and worthy of the divine benediction. The wedding is a suitable service for the temple of God, and the wedding march is not inappropriate music to resound within its consecrated walls. The Song of Solomon has been thought fit to be included in the canon of the holy Scriptures. Were this psalm simply a song of human love and a picture of domestic joy, it might not be unworthy to be preserved in the sacred literature of a nation.

But the Psalms are uniformly expressions of adoration to God and of religious emotion. They are vocal with the penitence, the humility, the faith,

the love, the joy, the hope of their writers, and of the people who consecrated them to the uses of worship. They were sung in the service of the sanctuary. The Jews of old, like the Christians of to-day, were ever anticipating the felicity and glorious triumph of God's coming kingdom. Their faces were toward the future, a future that was to them radiant with the Messianic hope. And the existence of this hymn in the midst of their sacred songs is presumptive evidence that it had to them a deeply religious import, even as their own writers have declared, and that whenever it was sung their thoughts leaped forth from the transient event that may have been its occasion to the glorious fulfillment of their dearest hopes, from the earthly bridegroom clothed with regal splendor to the divine King of infinitely superior grace and power, from the fair human princess adopted from a foreign land to the spotless bride whom the Messiah King would one day take to himself to be his forever.

Thirdly, the inspired writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews fixes the Messianic character of the psalm and its application to Christ, beyond a question or a doubt. In the first chapter of the Epistle the language of the sixth and seventh verses of the psalm is quoted as distinctly referring to Christ: "But unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the

sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." The writer of the Epistle is showing the superiority of Christ, the divine Son, to the angels, both in person and in office; and in proof of that superiority he quotes the psalmist's words as evidence which the Hebrews would not dispute, of Christ's divinity and supremacy, and the righteous and endless character of his reign. The argument is unfolded by Ebrard as follows:

> Three things are declared of the ideal of a theocratic King—consequently of the Messiah, (*a*) he is Elohim, his authority is the authority of God himself; (*b*) his dominion is endless; (*c*) both are true because he perfectly fulfills the will of God. The perfect theocratic King—therefore Christ [which required no proofs for the readers of the Epistle to the Hebrews] stands in this three-fold relation above the angels. He is the absolute revelation of God, and therefore himself God; the angels are only servants. He is King of an imperishable kingdom; the angels execute only periodical commands. He rules in a moral way as founder of a kingdom of righteousness, and his whole dignity as Messiah is founded directly on his moral and spiritual relation to man; the angels are only mediators of outward appearances of nature, by which a rude, unsusceptible people are to be trained for higher things.

The whole argument, it will be noticed, is pivoted upon the intended and acknowledged applica-

bility of the psalm to Christ, the Messiah King. "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever : a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."

Fourthly, the language of the psalm can be truthfully employed only of Christ, the Messiah King and the faithful Bridegroom of the people of God. Some of the language, as has been said, would easily find its application to some earthly royal bridegroom and his splendid wedding ; but much of it demands an object superior to any human prince and his regal nuptials. No allowance for Oriental extravagance can explain it. There is a precision and definiteness about it, that seems to determine its application to the Messiah King, the Prince of the House of the Spiritual Israel, and true Son of God. "*Thou art fairer than the children of men ; grace is poured into thy lips ; therefore God hath blessed thee forever.*" These words contain an acknowledgment of a beauty and eloquence, blessedness and perfection, more than human. They remind us of the descriptive language of the Gospels : "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," "They wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth," "Never man spake like this man," and of the striking words of Saint Paul, "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever."

But the king here described is not only fairer

than all the sons of men, his lips being filled with wonderful wisdom and grace, but he is to be mighty in battle ; indeed he is to be almighty, and the nations are to be subdued by him. He is to gird on his sword with glory and majesty, and ride on prosperously, not to acquire extent of territory and glittering renown, but "in behalf of truth and meekness and righteousness," an unparalleled combination of motives in any earthly conqueror, to uphold the truth, and extend the reign of meekness and righteousness among men. Such motives are found only in his breast who confessed to Pilate his kingly character, saying, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth," and whose kingdom rested upon such sublime and unworldly beatitudes as these : "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" and "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Such conquests are made, and such subjects are won, only by him who is the princely Captain of the world's salvation and its Deliverer from the pride and unrighteousness of the human heart ; and his arrows, which are sharp in the hearts of his enemies, may well be the sharp arrows of conviction sent from the bow of divine truth, which is the mighty weapon employed in all his conquests.

Moreover, we must all agree with the writer of

the Epistle to the Hebrews that the ascription of adoration and praise, "*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a sceptre of righteousness,*" cannot refer to any earthly prince, but only to Prince Immanuel, who does indeed love righteousness and hate wickedness, whose government has its foundations laid in righteousness, in the most regal of all principles, which is the essential foundation of a kingdom and an empire which are to be without end. The psalmist says, "*Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows,*" that is, thou art blessed of God above all thy fellow princes; above all earthly kings; and the Apostle Paul says, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, . . and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

It is impossible to read the description of the king in the psalm as possessing more than human grace and beauty, as a victorious warrior, as a righteous sovereign, as a bridegroom arrayed for his approaching marriage and surrounded by the praises of an exultant people, without recalling the vision, recorded in Rev. 19, of One who is declared to be "King of kings and Lord of lords," who is both king and warrior and bridegroom, and

whose victories and whose marriage call forth the loudest and most jubilant praises :

> I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia ; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God : for true and righteous are his judgments. . . And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia ; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him ; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

It will not do to undertake to find some spiritual, symbolic meaning in all the verses of the psalm, for some of the language, as in the case of the parables of our Lord, is but beautiful drapery. But the appearance and character of the bride, no less than the person and dignity of the royal Bridegroom, are clearly portrayed by the inspired writer in language applicable to the church of Christ. She is to be of exalted character and of great spiritual loveliness, queenly in her rank and queenly in the purity and excellence of her spirit, the fitting bride of a kingly Groom. "*Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear.*" Listen to the gracious words of instruction and invitation that fall from his lips. "*Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house.*" "Come out from among them, and be

ye separate." "Let the dead bury their dead." "Take up thy cross, and follow me, so shalt thou be my disciple." "*So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty.*" "Even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." "*For he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.*" Thy groom and also thy Lord; to receive thy love and confidence, and at the same time thy homage, thy obedience, thy sincere adoration. The queen's robes are no less beautiful and costly than the robes of the king. When the bright wedding day shall come, Zion shall put on her beautiful garments, and it will be found that the Lamb's wife has made herself ready. "*The king's daughter,*" says the psalmist, "*is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework.*" "And to her was granted," says the writer of the book of Revelation, "that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." "But we all," says Saint Paul, "with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," says

Saint John, "but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." All these striking phrases set forth the fitness, the worthiness, the spiritual likeness of the bride of Christ.

The robe of the bride and the robe of the groom shall be of the same piece, of like fineness and beauty and splendor, woven of the same material and in the same loom, resplendent with the glory of perfect righteousness. Christ is "made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption." "He became sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Oh, wondrous grace! Oh, blessed hope! In the prophetic psalm we read, "The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework." And the prophet of the New Testament tells us: "She shall be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

A fifth and last reason for accepting the Messianic import of this psalm is found in the fact already suggested that the portrayal of the coming Messiah as a kingly bridegroom is in harmony with other representations of the sacred writings, both in the Old Testament and in the New. Indeed, this seems to have been a favorite figure employed by the Holy Spirit to set forth the relations be-

tween God and his people, and between Christ and his followers. Isaiah says:[1] "For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." And again the same prophet says:[2] "Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy Builder [or Maker] marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." God said to his ancient people by the mouth of his prophet, Ezekiel:[3] "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee [which is equivalent to saying, 'I plighted thee my troth"], saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine," and then in true Eastern language he proceeded in the subsequent verses to describe the loving attentions which he had bestowed upon his people, even as a husband adorns and enriches his bride with beautiful and costly gifts. In like manner God speaks by his prophet, Hosea,[4] saying:

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[1] 54 : 5. [2] 62 : 4, 5. [3] 16 : 8. [4] 2 : 19, 20.

"And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies, I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord." Through two whole chapters the prophet sets forth under this figure the unchanging love of God and the wicked unfaithfulness of the people.

Turning to the New Testament we find Christ suggesting the same truth in the parable of the marriage of the king's son,[1] and in the parable of the ten virgins who went forth to meet the bridegroom,[2] he himself being the Son of the supreme King, whose marriage was to be celebrated, and the divine Bridegroom, for whose return all men should be found watching when the cry rings out, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." He also said, speaking of himself and his disciples, "Can the children of the bridechamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." John the Baptist employed the same figure to express his appreciation of the character of Christ, and in a beautifully humble way his relation to him. "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, re-

[1] Matt. 25 : 1, *seq.* [2] Matt. 22 : 1, *seq.*

joiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled."

The Apostle Paul had a similar thought in his mind when he wrote to the Corinthian church, in deepest anxiety for their spiritual welfare. "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." [1]

And certainly none of us can ever forget that memorable passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians,[2] in which the apostle, feeling that he but half apprehended the great truth of which he was speaking, and that there was still much about it that was mysterious, makes the union of Christ and his church, and the relation between them, the basis of a sacred and tender appeal for domestic affection and the most intimate and thoughtful and self-forgetting attachment between husband and wife:

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be

[1] 2 Cor. 11 : 2. [2] 5 : 22, *seq.*

holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh ; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery ; but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

We too, with the great apostle, may not be able to fathom the profound depth of this deep, deep truth. But there are some things that are plain. The force of the apostle's faithful and tender appeal for domestic love and fidelity depends upon the actual relation with himself into which Christ, the loving, thoughtful, self-denying Bridegroom, has taken his people, a relation of mutual affection, of beautiful regard, of costly service, of sacred fidelity, and of indissoluble attachment, a relation as real as that of husband and wife, of two souls that have been made one. It hardly need be said that all domestic infelicity grows out of a forgetfulness of the mutual obligations involved in the sacred marriage tie, and that all Christian unfaithfulness is the result of indifference to the sublime fact of revelation that Christ is the husband of his church, which he loved unto death, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, holy and without blemish.

Reference has already been made to the mar-

riage of the Lamb spoken of in the Apocalypse, and the robe of righteousness, clean and white as fine linen, in which the chosen bride was arrayed.[1] The divinely inspired seer could find no more accurate and beautiful language in which to describe the glorious city of the redeemed, than this, "And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." [2] And he carried the thought through to the very end of Revelation, when in view of the wonderful unfolding of the grace and love of God for the whole human race in the gospel of Christ, he uttered his final word in the form of an earnest and repeated invitation to men everywhere, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." [3] It is the inestimable privilege of the bride of Christ, as an expression of her appreciation of his saving love and power and of her sympathy for all the lost ones for whom he died, to join her voice in the grand chorus of invitation, which is never to cease until the world shall come to its end. Then it will be seen how gloriously true are John's other words, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." [4]

From all these reasons it is evident that this psalm may be confidently regarded as sketching typically the coming Messiah as the royal Bride-

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[1] Rev. 19 : 7, 8. [2] Rev. 21 : 2. [3] Rev. 22 : 17. [4] Rev. 19 : 9.

groom, the ever-living and ever-loving Husband of the whole church of God, who are to share with him the everlasting glory and the joy of heaven's marriage supper.

The following words are borrowed from Pressensé :

> The prophetic form is essentially symbolical. The prophet paints the future with the lineaments of the present, with the colors and the imagery furnished by the country and the age to which he belongs. It is the only method by which he can be understood. The customs of his people, known events, compose for him a rich and brilliant language, by means of which he reproduces the revelations which he has received.

It should be added that this psalm, after echoing the praises of the kingly bridegroom, "his more than human beauty, his persuasive eloquence, his might and prowess in war, his divine Majesty and the righteousness of his sway," and giving a description of the royal bride, her beautiful garments indicative of her moral and spiritual loveliness, her virgin companions and the songs of wedding joy as the procession advances, all of which give vividness and reality to the picture, concludes with a prophecy of the increase of the kingdom of the Messiah, the perpetuity of his reign, and the princely character of all his subjects. "*Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. I will make thy*

name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever."

Wellhausen acknowledges that these words "appear to refer to a larger kingdom than Israel ever became."

The mixed nature of the psalm, its local and also its prophetic application, is apparent in these words as elsewhere. Here the royal marriage is represented as resulting in a princely progeny of wide renown. But the psalmist is borne up and beyond the little local event and its consequences, and is led to use language which can only refer fittingly to the increase and duration of the Redeemer's kingdom. Perowne has said :

> The sacred poet sees the earthly king and the human marriage before his eyes, but whilst he strikes his harp to celebrate these, a vision of a higher glory streams in upon him. Thus the earthly and the heavenly mingle. The divine penetrates, hallows, goes beyond the human ; but the human is there.

In the psalm the children of the marriage maintain their separate existence. In the gospel the church's increase becomes a part of itself, and adds an ever-expanding beauty and glory to the spiritual bride of Christ. In the psalm the children are exalted to be "princes in all the earth." In the gospel we are made by Christ to be "kings and priests unto God and his Father." In the psalm it is written, "therefore shall the people praise thee for

ever." In the gospel we read, "to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." In psalm and gospel we have the picture of the divine Bridegroom, fairer than all the children of men, who will soon come to claim his chosen bride.

Rejoice, rejoice, believers !
And let your lights appear ;
The shades of eve are thickening,
And darker night is near :
The Bridegroom is arising,
And soon he will draw nigh ;
Up ! pray and watch and wrestle !
At midnight comes the cry.

O wise and holy virgins,
Now raise your voices higher,
Till in your jubilations
Ye meet the angel choir.
The marriage feast is waiting,
The gates wide open stand ;
Up, up, ye heirs of glory !
The Bridegroom is at hand.

Our hope and expectation,
O Jesus, now appear ;
Arise, thou Sun so longed for,
O'er this benighted sphere !
With hearts and hands uplifted,
We plead, O Lord, to see
The day of earth's redemption,
And ever be with thee.

CHAPTER VII

PSALM XLVI

VII

Psalm XLVI As we have already seen in our study of the Messianic psalms, there are some psalms in which the Messiah himself is represented as the speaker, for instance, 2, 16, and 22; and there are others in which he, his person, his mission, and his reign are distinctly the subject of discourse, as is apparent from their language, and from the quotations made from them by New Testament writers. Such are 45, 72, and 110. Indeed, with one exception, all the psalms which we have considered are quoted in the New Testament as referable to Christ, leaving no doubt as to their Messianic bearing and import. The language of that one exception is such as to make the application no less certain.

There is another class of psalms, somewhat numerous, which predict, to quote the words of Professor Hackett:

> The universal prevalence of the worship of God, the extension of his kingdom among all nations, and the promulgation of a plan of mercy in which all mankind are to participate. Such predictions, as we learn from other passages in the Old Testament and from explanations in the New, were designed to be accomplished in Christ, and hence the

psalms in which they are found, are reckoned as Messianic. It is to be observed that such psalms at the same time consist of other contents, such as praises, prayers, exhortations, precepts, which the authors of the psalms utter, as the expression of their own religious feelings and experience, and address more especially to those of their own time and dispensation.

The other psalms already considered are Messianic in a concrete or personal sense. Those here referred to are Messianic impliedly, or in virtue of the necessary connection between the events foretold and the appointed author of their accomplishment.

They portray a condition of things which was to be brought about only under the Christian dispensation, when the gospel should be preached in all the world, and should everywhere be victorious. They described certain great, spiritual, world-wide results, and imply the coming and triumph of the Messiah as the divinely appointed means by which those results are to be secured.

As has been said, this class of psalms is quite numerous. The Messianic expectation is constantly flashing out in the devotional literature of God's ancient people, and their hymns are full of the joy of a coming victory.

Indeed, comparatively few of the psalms are wanting in some recognition, more or less distinct, of the era when Jehovah is to be acknowledged as the object of universal worship, and the light which shone forth from the sanctuary on Mt. Zion, is to spread farther and farther until it illumines the whole earth.

A consummation to be realized only through the manifestation of the Messiah, who was to be the true light of the world. The predictive character of the Old Testament literature is too obvious to be disputed. Even De Wette, who certainly would not be tempted to overstate the matter, says:

> Long before Christ, the world in which he was to appear was prepared. The whole Old Testament is a great prophecy, a great type of him who was to come, and who did come. Who can deny that the holy seers of the Old Testament saw, in spirit, long beforehand, the coming of Christ, and had presages of the new doctrine in prophetic anticipations, varying in clearness? The typological comparison of the Old Testament with the New was no unmeaning amusement. And it is scarcely a mere accident that the evangelical history, in the more important points, runs parallel with the Mosaic.

The psalms which have been regarded as Messianic in this general sense by rabbinical and Christian commentators alike, are: 46, 47, 48, 68, 89, 93, 96, 97, 98, 102, 132, and others. The forty-sixth Psalm, which we are now to consider, and the two following ones, are hymns of triumph and rejoicing. They were evidently composed after some great victory, when God had signally interposed for the deliverance of his people, and they point forward to the final and glorious victory, after many a fierce conflict, of God and his people, and truth and righteousness in the world.

It is possible that these three psalms were born of the same occasion, and of the same great national event, though there is the same difference of opinion as to what the particular occasion was that exists about the origin of many other psalms. Hengstenberg and Delitzsch think it was the victory of Jehoshaphat over the combined forces of the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, whose invasion of Judah and miraculous overthrow are recorded in 2 Chron. 20. But Perowne and many others refer it to the memorable destruction of the army of Sennacherib under the walls of Jerusalem.

> That proud host had swept the land. City after city had fallen into the power of the conqueror. The career of Sennacherib and his captains had been one uninterrupted success. The capital itself alone held out, and even there the enfeebled garrison seemed little likely to make a successful resistance. The swollen river had, in the language of the prophet, overflowed all its channels, and risen even to the neck. It was at this crisis that deliverance came. When there was no succor to be expected, when neither king nor army could help the city, God helped her. He, the Lord of Hosts, was in the midst of her, keeping watch over her walls and defending her towers. His angel went forth at dead of night, and smote the host of the Assyrians, and when men awoke in the morning, there reigned in that vast camp the silence and the stillness of death. Such a deliverance must have filled the whole nation with wonder and joy.

It was some such deliverance, at that time or at some other, that inspired the unknown poet to

break forth in ascriptions of praise and thanksgiving to God, clothed in words of marvelous strength and beauty. It should be added that it is utterly unnecessary to accept the suggestion of Wellhausen, and look for the occasion and explanation of the psalm as late as the third century before the Christian era, unless one is determined to dispute its accepted antiquity, and insist that it is a more modern production. Wellhausen says:

> A complete revolution in all the component parts of a great political system, such as was occasioned by Alexander the Great (33 (?) B. C.), would explain this psalm, a shaking of the whole ancient world, leaving only Jerusalem unshaken, and appearing to the Jews as Jehovah's preparation for the Messianic kingdom, . . this is to be presupposed.

He does not venture to assert that the conquests of Alexander were the occasion of the psalm, but suggests that they might explain it—a wholly gratuitous assumption.

Looked at from merely a literary point of view, the psalm is a very remarkable one. "*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most*

High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth; he breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

It is impossible to restrict such sublime language to any local occurrence, however important it may have been in Jewish history. The waters, to use the psalmist's figure, overflow the banks which would confine them, and flow out into the wider history of God's people, and flow on until that history shall culminate in their final victory and redemption from all evil, and deliverance from every foe. It is a profound saying of Bacon that,

> Divine prophecies, being of the nature of their author, with whom a thousand years are but as one day, are therefore not fulfilled punctually at once, but have springing and germinant accomplishments.

These predictive words, so grand and far-reaching, so full of confidence and of consolation, of

conflict and of triumph, of wonder and of adoration, may be said to have had a hundred partial fulfillments, and yet not to be exhausted, not to have come even now to that final fulfillment which the inspired writer had in his far-reaching vision. There were undoubtedly partial fulfillments in the history of God's ancient people, which will account for the lack of unanimity in determining the particular reference of the psalm. There was a partial fulfillment in the first Christian centuries, when Christ saved the life of his church, and multiplied it amid cruel and unrelenting heathen persecutions, —saved it from threatened extinction, and multiplied it until it was exalted to the throne of the Cæsars, and spread far and wide through the known world. Often in those early years the hunted and slaughtered disciples must have cried out, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." There was a partial fulfillment in the beginning of the fifth century, when a wave of ruthless and repulsive barbarism swept down upon the Church of Christ, and threatened the very existence of Christian civilization. Those were the days of Vandals, and Huns, and Attila, "the scourge of God." Then must the followers of Christ have given expression to their faith in the memorable words, "God is in

the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted."

There was a partial fulfillment two centuries later, when the rapidly growing Mohammedan power seemed to be encircling Christendom, and about to annihilate the Christian faith, until upon the plains between Tours and Poictiers, Charles Martel, by the favor of the Almighty, defeated the fanatical hosts and saved Europe from falling into the hands of the disciples of the false prophet of Arabia. Then the followers of the true religion must have exclaimed, "Come, behold the works of the Lord; what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire."

Luther's famous hymn, which afterward became the national hymn of the emancipated German people,

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,

was forged in the hot fires, the burning controversies of the Reformation period, and was based upon this psalm, in recognition of its partial fulfillment. There was a partial fulfillment when England across the channel was saved to Protestantism by the destruction of the Spanish Armada, when

the tempest of God smote that formidable fleet, and scattered it, and wiped it from the face of the deep. In the presence of such a manifest divine interposition, Protestant England must have heard a voice out of the clouds saying, "Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen: I will be exalted in the earth," and must have devoutly and believingly answered back, "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

All these were but partial fulfillments. The psalm still points to the future. Its language still hangs loosely, like a garment too large, upon any and all events upon which it has been put. It waits to be filled out by the complete conquest of all enemies of God and his people, the universal enthronement of the Messiah King, and the universal reign of peace among the nations of the earth.

The psalm is divided into three strophes, each one of which ends with a Selah, and the last two close with a very significant refrain.

In the first strophe (ver. 1–3), God is declared to be the sure defense of his people in all perils and at all times. No matter how fearful may be the commotions among men and nations, represented by the moving earth, which ordinarily we call *terra firma*, and the mountains tumbling and sinking beneath the sea, the roaring and swelling

waves, at whose repeated blows the foundations of the hills are made to tremble—no matter how violent may be the assaults of evil, all forms of wickedness and misrule and anarchy, not only against personal character and peace, but against the basis of human government and social order and national integrity, and against the foundations of God's kingdom in the earth—God reigns, and we need not fear. He is mightier than the noise of many waters. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. The same thought was expressed by Christ in New Testament language: "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The second strophe (ver. 4–7) represents the peace of Zion as secured by the indwelling presence of God, and the destruction of all her enemies. "*There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.*' Dr. Watts in his inspiring hymn, which is based upon this psalm, beginning, "God is the refuge of his saints," has two stanzas in which he interprets the fourth verse of the psalm:

> There is a stream, whose gentle flow
> Supplies the city of our God;
> Life, love, and joy still gliding through,
> And watering our divine abode.

That sacred stream, thine holy word,
Our grief allays, our fear controls ;
Sweet peace thy promises afford,
And give new strength to fainting souls.

The sentiment of the hymn is true. These stanzas are a beautiful tribute to the power of God's word and its gracious promises, to sustain souls that are distressed and timid and faint. But that is not the thought of the psalm. It is not the word of God, but it is the presence of God himself, that is the source of the believer's and the church's confidence and peace. That river, with its ever-flowing and gladdening waters, represents God, the infinite and omnipresent Spirit, the abiding Protector of his people. "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved : God shall help her when the morning dawns," which is a better translation. God shall help her "in the morning of redemption and triumph as opposed to the night of disaster and sorrow." Not in her own strength, and not in alliance with the world and its powers and its forces, but in the strength of the Almighty is the peace, the prosperity of the church. Whenever the Church has allied herself to the State, and entered into unholy wedlock with the civil power, hoping thereby to gain prestige and influence, she has been secularized and weakened, and the progeny has been only evil and disaster. Her life, her members, her resources are all and only spiritual.

She must depend evermore upon the residence and aid of the Spirit of God. The figure of the unfailing stream was here employed, says Calvin,

> That the faithful might learn that, without any aid from the world, the grace of God alone was sufficient for them. . . Therefore, though the help of God may but trickle to us in slender streams, we should enjoy a deeper tranquillity than if all the power of the world were heaped up all at once for our help.

The third strophe (ver. 8–11) sets before us God as presiding over all human conflicts, the tribal and national wars, that have decimated peoples, have incarnadined oceans and drenched continents with blood, and have filled, and may yet fill, villages and cities with sorrow and tears, and his purpose to be exalted to the throne of undisputed and peaceful and universal supremacy on the earth. This strophe then closes like the preceding one with the refrain, "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

The psalm contains, it will be noticed, three distinct Messianic thoughts, which give to it its prophetic character and place in the Christological literature of the Old Testament.

First, there is the universal recognition of God as the one, true, and only supreme Being distinctly predicted, and to be brought about, as we know, only by the universal prevalence of Christianity. The God of the Jews, whose sovereignty, spiritual

nature, infinite wisdom and power, righteous and merciful character, were revealed by the prophets of the Old Testament and more fully revealed by the teachings of the New Testament, is to be acknowledged by the world as the God of the whole world: "*Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.*" This is the purpose of the Almighty, a purpose which was to be accomplished as Judaism was superseded by Christianity, and Christianity should be proclaimed among all nations and accepted by them. All that was best and permanent in Judaism passed over into Christianity. Christ "came not to destroy, but to fulfill." Judaism is a decadent and powerless religion. Having rejected the fuller revelation of God, God rejected it and gave it over to judicial blindness. It has become more and more unspiritual, rationalistic, and materialistic. It is no longer reckoned as an aggressive moral and spiritual force in the world.

But its sublime monotheistic faith is enshrined in the heart of the Christian religion, and the fight now is not between Judaism and idolatry and heathenism, as it once was, but between Christianity and all other religions which, whatever small elements of truth they may contain, like grains of wheat in mountains of chaff, have no conception of God as a supreme, holy, and merciful Spirit, and are therefore perversions of religion, religions in name, but

false in nature and harmful and deadening in their influence. They are not educating man toward a true, spiritual, and saving faith, but are tremendous obstacles to the progress of the true faith, as all Christian missionaries know to their sorrow. All study of these religions on their fields reveals their utter inability to reform and elevate social conditions or to regenerate and save the souls of men. They know not our God and possess not his truth. The fundamental purpose of all revealed religion is to make God known and secure his intelligent, devout, and loving acknowledgment. God says to all heathen religions and heathen teachers and philosophers, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "Ye worship, ye know not what. . . But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." The universal recognition of God can only be brought about through the universal proclamation of Christ and triumph of Christianity.

A second Messianic thought contained in the psalm is the universal reign of peace on earth: "*He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.*" Surely no one can say that this blessed predictive utterance has

been completely fulfilled. We stand at the threshold of the twentieth century, yet our ears are distressed with the sound of wars and rumors of wars coming from afar and near at hand. The air seems to be ringing with the cry, "To arms." On every side and constantly are busy preparations for threatened conflict, immense standing armies, the construction and purchase of war ships, the invention and manufacture of destructive explosives, the better defense of seaport towns, the careful measurement of available forces, everything that denotes that the cruel dogs of war may at any moment be let loose. The whole world seems to be waiting in breathless suspense. Almost every nation in Europe is standing at its guns, each eager for the acquisition of territorial advantage or suspicious of others' aggressions and ready to resort to arms at the slightest cause.

Our own nation, in which perhaps the love of peace is stronger and more deeply rooted than in any other, with the painful memories of the awful scenes of the sixties still fresh in mind, and still feeling the remains of the enormous burden of sorrow and of waste then endured, was plunged into a bloody conflict with Spain. No matter how humane the motive which actuated our government, and how free from all ambition for territorial expansion and the spirit of imperialism, no matter how justifiable and righteous the war may have

seemed in view of the degraded and suffering condition of millions of our fellow-beings under the oppressive rule of Spain, it was still war, with its suffering and death on the battlefield and in the hospital. War for any cause is a horrible thing, to be resorted to only to secure freedom from unrighteous and grinding oppression or for national self-preservation. The united prayer of Christendom ascends to-day, as never before, May God save us from the waste, the destruction, the misery, the inhumanity of cruel war, which seems but a relic of a barbarous age and utterly opposed to the humane and enlightened sentiment of this late period of the Christian era. May God convert and subdue all savage tribes and make nominally Christian nations Christian indeed, lovers of peace and patient under supposed or real provocation, and help them to feel that the highest patriotism, like the highest manhood, may consist in self-mastery, not in a brutal trial of physical strength, but in a calm and dignified assertion of the right, and a willingness to submit the decision to peaceful arbitration and to the judgment of coming generations and of Almighty God.

There is no doubt what that judgment will be, for it is the better hope of mankind that wars shall come to an end ; aye, more, it is the purpose of the Almighty that they shall come to an end. "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth."

The fulfillment of the prophecy still tarries, but it is certain to come, for it is a vital part of that Messianic glory which is in due time to cover the earth. "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." The Messiah is the "Prince of Peace." When he was born into the world the angels sang a new anthem of "Peace on earth, good will to men." The ancient prophecy was reannounced. God's purpose leaped forward toward its fulfillment. The new doctrine should strike at the throat of all national hostility as well as personal bitterness. The new kingdom should be founded in the brotherhood of nations as well as the brotherhood of man. It should be a kingdom of righteousness and joy and world-wide peace. Human history has too often, even in this Christian era, been written in blood. But a new chapter is coming, as the Messiah shall be enthroned in the hearts of men and in the councils of nations:

Down the dark future, through long generations,
The sounds of war grow fainter, and then cease;
And like a bell with solemn, sweet vibrations,
I hear once more the voice of Christ say, "Peace!"

Peace! and no longer, from its brazen portals
The blast of war's great organ shakes the skies!
But beautiful as songs of the immortals,
The holy melodies of love arise.

The proposition for a peace conference by the representatives of the great nations, issued by the Czar of Russia, cannot but be regarded as the most remarkable and hopeful event of the nineteenth century. Whatever may have been the motive which led to it, and the results to which it will lead, the fact that it was submitted to the foreign diplomatists at St. Petersburg will ever mark August 24, 1898, as a memorable day in human history and as a bright omen of the approach of that era in the world's progress when Christian ideals of national life and greatness will be universally recognized and honored. The opening words of the imperial proposition are profoundly significant:

> The maintenance of general peace and the possible reduction of the excessive armaments which weigh upon all nations, present themselves in existing conditions to the whole world as an ideal toward which the endeavors of all governments should be directed.

The concluding words are equally significant:

> This conference will be, by the help of God, a happy presage for the century which is about to open. It would converge into one powerful focus the efforts of all States sincerely seeking to make the great conception of universal peace triumph over the elements of trouble and discord, and it would, at the same time, cement their agreement by a corporate consecration of the principles of equity and right, whereon rest the security of States and the welfare of peoples.

Christian statesmanship has found no truer expression since Christ taught and laid the foundations of his kingdom on the hills of Galilee. Such an expression from such a source is a most encouraging augury of the complete triumph of the Prince of Peace among the nations of the earth.

The third Messianic thought contained in the psalm is the presence and immanence of God among men. As we have already seen, the peace of Zion was made certain, because "*God is in the midst of her.*" The suggestive refrain at the end of the second and third strophe is, "*The Lord of hosts is with us.*" The Hebrew scholar will here quickly detect what seems to be the prophetic intimation of the language, which occurs also in Isa. 8 : 10. It is "Immanu" and "Immanuel." In the Gospel of Matthew, in the account of the birth of Christ, the Messiah, we read, "And shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name *Immanuel*, which being interpreted is, God with us." The word is the same. Perowne says, "The burden alike of prophecy and psalm is Immanuel, God with us." The great message of the New Testament to the whole human race is Immanuel, God with us.

God was with his ancient people by his Spirit, and spoke to them often and unmistakably by the mouth of his prophets. He was there in the burning bush, in the shekinah of the tabernacle, and in

the pillar of cloud and of fire, as well as in the Angel of Jehovah, whom many believe to be the pre-existent Christ. But he came into new and closer and more appreciable relations to humanity when he was incarnated in Jesus Christ. He was no longer a God afar off, the invisible Spirit, too often unrecognized and unknown. He became visible, tangible, one of us, clothed with our humanity, living a real life, entering into our sorrows and our joys, our brother, a man whose biography could be written and published to the world, and whose death could make atonement for the sins of the whole human family. "The word became flesh, and dwelt among us." Christ was "God manifest in the flesh," and was so true and adequate a manifestation of God that he could say, with no thought of contradiction, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

And so it is that the thought of the psalmist, which was a very real and very comforting thought to him, and to those who with him truly apprehended it, is sensibly fulfilled to us in the person of our divine Immanuel. God has come into human life and into human history. We can see his footsteps, we can trace his influence, we can look upon his mighty deeds, we can hear his words of matchless wisdom, we can feel his presence and his sympathy.

We repeat the old psalm with a new and richer

and fuller meaning since Christ was born. It signified much to him who wrote it; it signifies vastly more to us. "God is with us" in the progress of humanity and its divine unfolding purpose, for he has identified himself with it. "God is with us" in the history of nations, for he became a Jew, and wept over Jerusalem. "God is with us" in the life of the church, for he laid its foundations in his blood, he became himself its corner-stone and the bishop of souls. "God is with us" in our personal experiences, for he is our brother and Saviour, our refuge under the consciousness of sin, our strength in the midst of all temptations, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, whatever may be our present lot, and whatever may befall us. "God is with us" under our present burden, and in the unknown events of the future. "God is with us" in life and in death, in time and eternity. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

CHAPTER VIII

SPECIAL MESSIANIC QUOTATIONS

VIII

Special Messianic Quotations

In addition to the psalms which we have examined and found to refer to the Messiah, some of them containing distinct statements of his character, mission, and dominion, and others foretelling a condition of things, social, moral, and religious, to be brought about only by the universal proclamation and acceptance of the gospel, there are numerous single verses scattered throughout the book of Psalms, and quoted in the New Testament as specially applicable to Christ, or intentionally prophetic of him. Our study of the Messianic psalms would not be complete without some consideration of these scattered foregleams of the coming Messiah. They have reference to both aspects of Christ's personal character and work, as conqueror and sufferer, as supreme King with world-wide dominion, and as divinely appointed Priest offering atonement for the sins of mankind.

These separate verses, like most of the passages which we have reviewed, and indeed like the majority of the passages in the Old Testament quoted by writers of the New Testament as referable to Christ, had a local and contemporaneous applica-

tion, a primary meaning, a partial fulfillment in some person or event near at hand, though it is so difficult to determine what the local application or fulfillment was, that often there is no unanimity of judgment among biblical scholars. Dr. Franklin Johnson, in his able volume entitled "The Quotations of the New Testament from the Old," says:

> The writers of the New Testament often treat as relating to the Messiah and his kingdom passages written with reference to persons who lived, and events which happened, centuries before the Christian era. There are direct Messianic predictions in the Old Testament, like Isa. 8 : 23 ; 9 : 1, 2 ; Zech. 9 : 9–17. The predictions of this kind, however, are relatively few in number, and usually the passages quoted in the New Testament as pointing forward to Christ were occasioned by some person or event contemporary with the prophet.

This double reference has been accepted by the great body of devout scholars, and more than that, it has been shown to have its illustrations in all literature, ancient and modern. Christ and the writers of the New Testament have given to it their emphatic and unquestionable endorsement.

The importance of a recognition of the large place which the Messianic element occupies in the Old Testament, has been well set forth by Rev. Stanley Leathes, in the "Boyle Lectures" for 1868:

> It does not admit of any reasonable doubt that our Lord himself believed and taught that the Old Testament Scrip-

tures spoke of a Messiah. This position is involved in the whole tissue of the New Testament. If, therefore, it was a false one, then the conclusion is inevitable that the evangelists and apostles, nay, even that Christ himself, built a large portion of their teaching upon a false foundation. Their premises were unsound. The argument that Jesus was the Christ of the Old Testament was worth nothing, if, as a matter of fact, the Old Testament did not speak of any Christ. To assert this, is practically to sweep away more than half the basis on which the apostles rest the fabric of their doctrine.

Similar language has been used by Dr. E. P. Barrows, showing that the large Messianic element in the Old Testament has entered largely and vitally into the organic structure of the New Testament:

That in Christ were fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament, appears in every variety of form in the Gospel narratives. It constituted, so to speak, the warp into which the Saviour wove his web of daily instruction. Now, if a single thread, unlike all the rest in substance and color, had found its way into this warp, we might, perhaps, regard it as foreign and accidental; but to dissever from our Lord's words all his references to the prophecies concerning himself in the Old Testament, would be to take out of the web all the threads of the warp, and then the web itself would be gone.

It may be said in general about the quotations in the New Testament, that they follow the same laws which prevail in other literatures. They are made largely from the Septuagint version, with

which the writers were most familiar. They are sometimes fragmentary and sometimes composite, exactly like the quotations from the Bible and other books which speakers and literary men are making to-day. They are sometimes quotations from memory, and sometimes quotations of the substance of the passage, rather than the exact language, as is often the case in modern times, and was necessarily the case when copies of the Scriptures were not numerous, and frequently were not near at hand.

It has often been remarked, how wonderfully the inspired writers have been preserved from falling into error in their frequent use of the Old Testament. It is not too much to say that the Spirit of truth, whom Christ promised to them, was present with them to aid them in their composition, and to "lead them into all the truth." A candid examination of the New Testament quotations will show them to be remarkably pure and true to the original thought, even when the language has not been perfectly repeated. They constitute a great body, and are employed alike for argument and illustration. Prof. C. H. Toy mentions one hundred and thirty-seven quotations from the book of Psalms alone, making almost one for each psalm. Dr. Howard Osgood mentions two hundred and thirty-nine passages which are quoted or referred to. It is impossible to find such a body of quotations in

any volume of addresses or sermons, in which a like accuracy has been preserved. Indeed, it is a canon of rhetoric, and an oft-repeated note of warning among literary men—"Verify your quotations." Such uniform accuracy on the part of the New Testament writers, together with Christ's promise of aid to them by the Holy Spirit, which could not have been an unmeaning promise to those who were called to be the expounders of divine and saving truth to the world, prepares us to accept confidently their interpretation of Old Testament language as applicable to Christ, the Messiah, even though it had a local reference and application.

Dr. Franklin Johnson, in his volume, devotes its longest chapter, extending through one hundred and fifty pages, to the interesting topic, "Double Reference." He rightly objects to the term "double sense," and insists upon the term "double reference," as growing out of the universally acknowledged typical relation of the Old Testament to the New. He quotes Alford as saying:

> No word prompted by the Holy Ghost had reference to the utterer only. All Israel was a type; all spiritual Israel set forth "the second man," "the quickening Spirit"; all the groanings of God's suffering people prefigured and found their fullest meaning in his groans who was the chief in suffering. The maxim cannot be too firmly held or too widely applied, that all the Old Testament utterances of the Spirit anticipate Christ, just as all his New Testament utterances set forth and expound Christ: that Christ is every-

where involved in the Old Testament, as he is everywhere evolved in the New Testament.

To miss this intimate relation and connection between the two Testaments, is to miss the great truth that we have in the Bible the progressive revelation of God to the world, a revelation inspired and guided by one Spirit, and that Spirit the Spirit of Him who was its sublime purpose and end, and whose grace and salvation were to be made known by it to lost men. This is the thought that finds expression in those very remarkable words of the Apostle Peter: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." It was one inspiring Spirit, one controlling personality, one divine revealer in it all. The Spirit of the Christ of the New Testament is declared to have been in the prophets who spoke in the Old Testament, suggesting, foreshadowing, predicting, "testifying beforehand," by type and symbol, event and utterance, what was to be explained, unfolded, fulfilled in the New Testament. From this fact has arisen that accepted axiom of all Christendom, "*In vetere novum latet, in novo vetus patet.*" And it is this unquestionable fact that gives to so much of the ritual and

history, biography and song of God's ancient people a future as well as a contemporary reference. Professor Briggs, while denying the "double sense" theory, admits a "double reference" view in these words:

> But inasmuch as the prediction advances from the temporal redemption of its circumstances to the eternal redemption of the Messiah, and it is a part of a series of predictions in which the experience of redemption is advancing, it cannot be otherwise than that some of the elements of the predicted redemption should be realized in historical experience ere the essential elements of the Messianic redemption are attained.

Illustrations of this double reference" have been adduced by Doctor Johnson from all literatures, ancient and modern, from Æschylus, Homer, Virgil, Dante, Goethe, Schiller, La Fontaine, Molière, Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson, Longfellow, and many others. Indeed, he says that "a literature would hardly be worthy of the name, that did not often present to the reader sudden ascensions from the low to the lofty, from the actual to the ideal, from the obvious and commonplace to the region of all dreams and imaginations and hopes." Such double reference, therefore, in the Jewish Scriptures is in harmony with the usage of all best literature, as well as inevitable from the professedly anticipatory and typical nature of the religion and history of the children of Israel.

What had been said seemed necessary in order to meet any possible objection to the Messianic interpretation of certain passages in the Psalms by the New Testament writers.

Let us turn now to Ps. 8 : 5, 6, which reads: "*For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.*" The Hebrew word translated "angels" probably means God, and the passage undoubtedly refers to the statement in the first chapter of Genesis, that man was created in the image of God. It is a recognition of the divine origin of man, of his moral dignity and his supremacy in all the realm of the animal kingdom. The statement sets forth the primal glory of God's highest creature, man, and not his present fallen condition in sin. Delitzsch speaks of it as "a lyric echo of the Mosaic account of the creation." It contains also the purpose of God in man's creation and the promise of a supremacy that is to be complete. This is the opinion of able commentators, and this is the interpretation of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews,[1] who quotes from the Septuagint version instead of the Hebrew, saying "angels" instead of "God," if that is the true meaning of the Hebrew

[1] 2 : 6–9.

word. He is speaking of Christ as the typical man, in whom the destiny of humanity was to be realized. It is an acknowledgment of his humiliation, and at the same time of his glory. The language in his view pointed backward to the creation of Adam, and forward to the redemption of Christ. Man does not now occupy the place for which God intended him. His purpose in creation is not yet fulfilled. We see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels or God (the argument is the same whichever word is used), we see him who identified himself with humanity, who took human nature into his embrace and became its head, its representative, its ideal impersonation, we see him, already "crowned with glory and honor." The language of the psalm contains not only the exalted purpose of God in man's creation, but a distinct prophecy of the fulfillment of that purpose in the Messiah, who was the ideal man, the Son of man as well as the Son of God, and whose ultimate and complete supremacy is foretold in psalm and prophecy, in Gospel and Epistle.[1]

Professor Cheyne's comment acknowledges the perfect naturalness of this reference of the psalm to Christ as the ideal man.

> Man, in short, is idealized, for (to apply the words of

[1] See also 1 Cor. 15 : 25-27; Eph. 1 : 22.

Heb. 2 : 8) "we see not yet all things made subject to him." How natural it was, and (as Doctor Westcott has shown) how natural it is, to apply this psalm to Christ, the Son of man! But there is an application still nearer to the letter of the text, viz, to regenerate humanity (which St. Paul would call "the body of Christ"). The psalm is virtually a prophecy of the glorification of the race.[1]

Yes, but not apart from Christ, to whom the psalm is declared to point, and in whom it was evidently fulfilled. The hope of a glorified humanity rests upon him, "Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, . . that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

The words of Ps. 31 : 5, "*Into thy hand I commit my spirit*," were quoted by our Lord, when about to expire upon the cross.[2] They can hardly be said, however, to have been a distinct prophecy of that scene, but rather an expression of the calm and unshaken faith of all devout souls when they stand face to face with death and the unseen world, and are sustained by their hope in the unchanging love and uninterrupted care of the Father of our spirits. Similar words were spoken by the first martyr, Stephen, when the stones did their cruel work.

In Ps. 34 : 20 it is written, "*He keepeth all his bones : not one of them is broken.*" In the account of the crucifixion of our Saviour, as given by John,

[1] Comp. 2 Peter 1 : 4. [2] Luke 23 : 46.

it is said that the Roman soldiers finished their work of death by breaking the legs of the companions of Christ, "But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs"; and then it is significantly added, "For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."[1] Professor Toy thinks that the probable reference is to the language of the psalm, John giving a special and impliedly unwarranted application to Christ of a general statement of "the care that God exercises over his servants, so that not one of their bones is broken." But it is altogether more likely, if not absolutely certain, that the reference is to the institution of the Jewish Passover, and the instructions for the preparation of the lamb to be eaten,[2] "Neither shall ye break a bone thereof." John's Gospel is the one that holds up before us Christ as "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and he would be especially likely to notice the omission of the soldiers, and the fulfillment of the typical rite in Christ. It was the time of the Passover, when the crucifixion took place. We are told that, "In preparing the lamb for roasting, the Jews ran spits through it in the form of a cross, as the Samaritans do to this day." The paschal lamb is declared not only by John, but

[1] John 19 : 36. [2] Exod. 12 : 46; Num. 9 : 12.

by Peter and Paul, to be the prefigure of Christ. Christ is "our Passover." He was a true paschal lamb. The prophetic Scripture was fulfilled, "A bone of him shall not be broken." When in celebrating the Lord's Supper it is said: "This is my body, which is broken for you," a mistake is committed. The word "broken" is not found in the original. It has been inserted in the translation. The broken bread represents the wounded, the bruised body of Jesus, but not his broken body. We conclude, therefore, that John did not refer to the language of the psalm as containing a prophecy of Christ. It was not a general reference to the general care of God over the life of his servants, but a particular reference to the provision which God has made in Christ for the salvation of his people.

Godet's comment is as follows:

> It refers to the manifestation of the *Messianic* character of Jesus. . . To understand what John felt at the moment which he here recalls, we must suppose a believing Jew, familiar with the Old Testament, seeing the soldiers approach, who are to break the legs of the three victims. He asks himself anxiously what is to be done to the body of the Messiah, which is still more sacred than the paschal lamb. And lo! simultaneously and in the most unexpected manner this body is rescued from the brutal operation which threatened it.

In Ps. 40 : 6–8 it is written, "*Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou*

opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." These words undoubtedly had a primary reference to the psalmist himself. He had learned the important lesson which God was ever seeking to teach his people, that obedience was better than sacrifice, that the costliest offerings and the most exact performance of the most elaborate ritual were all unavailing, unless there was present a heart devout, sincere, spiritual, and cheerfully obedient to all the known will of God. Animal sacrifices were empty and valueless, a very mockery, unless there was the living sacrifice of one's self upon God's altar of service. If the psalm was written by David, whose name it bears, it is in entire harmony with that other psalm of his, the fifty-first, in which he says: "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Penitence, obedience, the loving heart, the consecrated and godly life, these are the things which distinguish true worshipers, these are the things which are acceptable to God. So the psalmist had learned, and according to this rule he undoubtedly endeavored to order his life.

But the psalm was to find its perfect illustration

and fulfillment in Jesus Christ. He would show in himself not only the superiority of spiritual worship and obedience to all sacrificial offerings, but the completion and termination of the outward rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic religion in the one sacrifice of himself, and the universal substitution of the worship of the heart and of the life. This was the sublime purpose of Christ's coming into the world, to make all men spiritual worshipers and loyally obedient to the Supreme Will of the universe. The central thought of the psalm was to find its perfect expression in the coming Messiah. So the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares. It was as if Christ had announced, at his advent, "The days of your ritualism are ended; the old dispensation has accomplished its preparatory and educational purpose: sacrifices are forever done away in my death; the consecration of the spirit in devout faith and cheerful obedience, as illustrated in my earthly life, is the one supreme characteristic of all true religion the world over." In Heb. 10 : 5–7, the words of the psalm in a peculiar sense are attributed to Christ: "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then, said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God."

These words are quoted from the Septuagint version, with which the writer was familiar. One variation from the Hebrew has occasioned much discussion. Instead of "mine ears hast thou opened," the Epistle reads, "a body hast thou prepared me," which Professor Toy thinks "comes probably from a scribal corruption of the Greek text" in the Septuagint. In the Hebrew the difference between the two readings is so slight that one might easily be mistaken for the other. It has been suggested by De Wette that if the Septuagint had translated it "ears hast thou prepared me," the thought which the New Testament writer finds in the passage would have been unimpaired. It may be that the translator simply substituted the whole for a part, "body" for "ears," which would not have changed the sense of the passage. If a man's body has been prepared as an instrument to do God's will, all the separate members will be ready to do their various functions, the ears to hear, the eyes to see, the hands to perform, and the feet to run in the way of God's commandments. It cannot be said that the writer of the Epistle takes any advantage of the use of the word "body," and carries the thought beyond the exact meaning of the psalm, as he might have been tempted to do by the nature of his argument. Tholuck, as stated by Dr. John Pye Smith, observes that the offering of the *body* of Christ is not by any means the thing implied in

the argument of the apostle in itself and solely. It was the entire obedience of Christ in all his affections, actions, life, and death—of which the sufferings of the mere bodily frame were but the last term—that constituted his inestimable sacrifice. He cites the excellent passage of Calvin :

> The apostle follows the Septuagint, *a body*, etc. ; for the writers were not superstitious in the reciting of sentences quoted, only they took care not to make erroneous applications of the Old Testament to serve their own convenience. We should constantly keep in view *what was their purpose* in making any citation ; for in having respect to that purpose they were diligently scrupulous not to put upon the Scripture any sense other than its own proper meaning ; but with respect both to mere words and to some other circumstances which are not now our subject, they allowed themselves a just and rational liberty.

Dr. Franklin Johnson has well remarked :

> It should be added that the underlying sense of the phrase in the Septuagint is the same with that of the Hebrew phrase, though the language is so different. The Hebrew says, "Mine ears hast thou opened," that is, to hear the divine voice in an obedient spirit. The Septuagint says, "A body didst thou prepare for me," that is, as an organ, by means of which I may obey the divine voice. Thus in both cases the obedience of Christ unto death is presented to the reader as the substitute for the sacrifices of the Mosaic dispensation. This is maintained by all critics of all schools. The writer of the Epistle, therefore, might have employed the phrase of the Septuagint with some emphasis ; and his refusal to do so is an interesting evidence of his scrupulous

care to keep within the bounds of propriety in the use of the Old Testament.

Perowne thinks that the words of the psalm

Are not quoted as a prophecy which was fulfilled in Christ, but the writer finds words which once expressed the devotion of a true Israelite to be far more strikingly expressive, indeed in their highest sense only truly expressive, of the perfect obedience of the Son of God. All true words of God's saints of old, all high and holy aspirations, however true and excellent in their mouths, went far beyond themselves and found their perfect consummation only in him who was the perfect man.

These words would be true of many quotations; but in this instance they fail to represent the full thought of the New Testament writer. For he uses the quotation not so much as an illustration as an argument.

The language of Dr. John Pye Smith gives an accurate interpretation of the passage and seems none too strong:

The terms of the passage appear to require absolutely the sense of the abrogation of the animal sacrifices, by a person who declares that the very book which prescribed those sacrifices had its superior reference to him, and that he himself would present the only sacrifice that should be worthy of the Deity to accept. I must despair of ever acquiring consistent knowledge or satisfaction on any subject of rational inquiry; I must give up the first principles of evidence as to prophecy and interpretation and renouncing all sober rules of interpretation, commit myself to the ex-

travagance of fancy and arbitrary dictates if this be not a clear and characteristic description of the Messiah. The summary of the psalm which Michaelis prefixes to his translation well expresses its design and character: "A great person, who describes himself as the only offering acceptable to God, and to whom Moses alluded in all his laws about sacrifices, in his sufferings prays to God, expects help from him, and promises to glorify his name. Thus the person who speaks is not David, but one greater than he, even Christ, the great sacrifice for the human race."

In Ps. 41 : 9 we find these words which appear again, in part, in the New Testament narrative: "*Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.*" These words were prompted by some personal incident in the psalmist's experience, where his confidence had been misplaced and one who had shared his favor and his hospitality had proved false at heart and basely deceitful and treacherous. These words are quoted by Christ, as recorded by John, as having been fulfilled in the treachery of Judas. Christ, however, omits the first part of the verse, as if he would not admit that there was any time when he trusted Judas and did not know the deceitfulness of his heart. In John 13 : 18 we read: "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." Professor Toy says: "According to the account given in John, the psalm is

regarded by Jesus as Messianic, and these words applied to the treachery of Judas." As to the meaning which should be ascribed to the words, "that it may be fulfilled," in this place and probably in some other places, the remark of Perowne is eminently wise and candid :

> It is evident that "the Scripture is fulfilled" not merely when a prediction receives its accomplishment, but when words descriptive of certain circumstances in the life of the Old Testament saints finds a still fuller and truer realization—one not foreseen by the psalmist, yet one no less designed by God—in the circumstances of our Lord's earthly life.

The most that can be said is, that this psalm is Messianic in the sense that, according to Christ's statement, David and his pretended friend were typical of Jesus and the traitor.

Godet's opinion is expressed as follows :

> Ps. 41, from the tenth verse of which this quotation is taken, is but indirectly Messianic ; its immediate subject is the just man in affliction, but this ideal is only perfectly realized in the suffering Messiah. Among the troubles which befall the righteous, the psalmist (David according to the title, Jeremiah according to Hitzig), places in the front rank the treachery of an intimate friend. In the mouth of David this would refer to Ahithophel. This last stroke, Jesus would say, cannot fail to reach me also, in whom all the sorrows as well as all the virtues of the righteous sufferer are combined. This is, in the context, the meaning of the formula : "That the Scripture might be fulfilled."

Ps. 68 is acknowledged to be Messianic in its general scope according to principles explained in the last chapter. It anticipates a condition of things to be brought about only through the universal prevalence of Christianity. Indeed, it is a magnificent hymn, portraying in language of marvelous strength and beauty the onward march of God's kingdom among the nations. Some have seen in it only a direct prophecy of Christ and his reign and no local reference whatever, believing it to foretell in vivid and splendid imagery his advent upon earth, the blessed effect of his truth, his resurrection and ascension into heaven, and his dominion and reign. Other scholars, properly regarding it as occasioned by some local event, differ widely and irreconcilably as to its primary application. But all acknowledge the vigor, the richness, the rhetorical splendor of the psalm, and that it required a poet of extraordinary genius to compose it. Why not David, the sweet singer, the royal bard, the inspired laureate of Israel, to whom it is ascribed? Greece had but one Homer, Italy but one Dante, England but one Shakespeare, and Israel but one David. It is impossible not to recognize the Messianic spirit which pervades the psalm and the Messianic hope and expectation which inspired it and pulsate in many of its utterances. It pictures to us the victorious march and glorious entry of God into his sanctuary on Zion.

This is described under figures borrowed from the triumph of an earthly conqueror who, after having vanquished his enemies and taken possession of their country, marches in solemn procession at the head of his troops to occupy the city which he had selected as his capital and the seat of empire, . . where he reigns in . . . universal dominion, acknowledged and feared by all the nations of the earth.

Only a few specimen verses can be given to show the power, the sweep, the sublimity of the language. Notice how majestically the psalm opens:

"*Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered. . . As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.*

"*But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice. Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him.*"

The beneficence of his reign is thus set forth:

"*A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains.*"

The terrible power and successful purpose of God are thus expressed:

"*O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; the earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God.*"

"*The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels.*"

"*Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever.*"

"*Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men. . . Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation.*"

His universal dominion is declared in these words:

"*Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God. Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord.*"

Such is the power, the benevolence, the glory, the dominion of God, proclaimed and manifested, realized and accomplished, as never before, through the incarnation, the doctrine, the death, the resurrection, and ascension of our Saviour, to whom "be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever."

Although the psalm is so strongly Messianic, there is but a single direct quotation from it in the New Testament. In Eph. 4 : 8 the Apostle Paul quotes the eighteenth verse in this way: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." The inspired apostle applies the words clearly to the resurrection and ascension of our Lord and to the

glorious results of his earthly mission. The ascent of the ark of the Lord, which was the symbol of Jehovah's presence, into Mount Zion, prefigured the ascent of Christ into heaven. And as the triumphal procession of the returning victor brought with it the captives and the spoils to be distributed among the people, so Christ returning from the conflict and the conquest of earth is represented as bringing his captives with him, sin and death and hell, and all the powers of evil chained, as it were, to his triumphal chariot, and also the rich spoils of life and immortality, an abundance of gifts to be distributed freely among the children of men.

The word in the psalm is "received," which, according to Meyer, means received in order to give. The apostle takes the full thought in its application to Christ and says "gave." He, the crucified and ascended Lord, has come into possession of all spiritual treasure, and lives and reigns that he may dispense it to a needy world. A true king receives that he may impart. He takes in order to give. What are some of his gifts to men? Christ gave the Holy Spirit to "convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." "If I go, I will send him unto you." He gave the Christian ministry and appointed it to its necessary service. "And he gave some, apostles, and some, prophets, and some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of

ministering, for the edifying of the body of Christ." He gives the peace of forgiveness to all penitent and believing souls. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you." He gives the water of salvation unto all thirsty ones. "The water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." He gives all things that are needful to secure purity and steadfastness in the Christian profession. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." He gives to all obedient followers that fullness and richness and expansion of life which is called eternal life. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." He gives to all weak and struggling disciples the assurance of final and complete victory. "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." So said the psalmist and so says the New Testament. Since his ascension this has been his kingly occupation. We may all, if we will, share in the priceless gifts of the ascended Son of God.

CHAPTER IX

SPECIAL MESSIANIC QUOTATIONS

(CONTINUED)

IX

Special Messianic Quotations

THERE are a few more special references to Christ in the Psalms which have been quoted by New Testament writers, which it will be necessary for us to consider in order to make our review of them fairly complete. Quite a number of psalms which are full of the Messianic hope and point clearly to the coming of the kingdom and triumph of the Messiah, having failed of quotation in the Christian Scriptures, do not necessarily come within the scope of our present purpose. Two of these as specimens, viz, 72 and 46, we have already considered, and others have been indicated, the Messianic character of all of which is uniformly conceded, both by rabbinical and Christian scholars.

It should be remembered that though verses are quoted from some psalms, in the New Testament, as applicable to Christ, the entire psalms may not be Messianic; indeed, other verses of the psalms, which contain confessions of human weakness and passion and sin, preclude any such supposition. The human and divine elements are woven together in a single composition, both the local refer-

ence which is true to its human subject, and the prophetic reference which is true to the future Messiah, being apparent. Prophetic intimations are like pictures set in human framework, like brilliant flashes of light out of surrounding clouds.

A good illustration of this kind of Messianic literature is found in Psalm 69. There is no psalm, and indeed no portion of the Old Testament, that is more frequently quoted in the Christian Scriptures than this, with the exception of Psalms 22 and 110. Not less than eight quotations from it, or references to it, are found in the Gospels of Matthew and John, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistle to the Romans, six of them pertaining to Christ,[1] one to the punishment of Judas for his treachery toward his Master,[2] and one to the punitive rejection of the Jews for their rejection of the divinely appointed Messiah.[3] Yet in the midst of these quoted passages, or rather surrounding them, are verses which can by no possible means be referred to Christ, and are utterly incongruous with his character. They are rather expressions of the spirit and character of the psalmist. Indeed, those passages which are referable to Christ, and rightly so, are sometimes such, quite as much by way of illustration and application as by distinct and specific prediction.

[1] Matt. 27 : 27-30; 27 : 34; John 2 : 17; 15 : 25; Rom. 15 : 3.
[2] Acts 1 : 20. [3] Rom. 11 : 9, 10.

The following words from Prof. H. B. Hackett will make our meaning plain:

A class of psalms reckoned as Messianic in a subordinate sense are those which describe general relations of truths, which contain prophecies or inspired declarations, which are verified as often as individuals are placed in particular circumstances, which lay within the view not necessarily of the writer, but of the Holy Spirit at whose dictation they were uttered. Thus the sixty-ninth Psalm is quoted in Acts 1 : 20 (see ver. 25) as if descriptive of the treatment which Christ should receive at the hands of his enemies, especially of Judas. The entire psalm cannot be strictly Messianic, for in ver. 5 the speaker says: "O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee." The subject of the psalm is rather the experience of the righteous in this world of treachery and wickedness on the one hand, and the conduct of the ungodly toward the righteous and their desert of punishment on the other. Hence when Peter quotes a passage of the psalm as spoken of Judas and fulfilled in him, we may understand him as declaring that the perfidy of Judas identified him fully with such persecutors of the righteous as the psalm contemplates, and hence that it was necessary that he should suffer the doom of those who sin in so aggravated a manner. The one hundred and ninth Psalm, and others, are susceptible of this mode of interpretation.

Similar words are used by Perowne in his introduction to the sixty-ninth Psalm:

It will be observed that many of these quotations are made generally by way of illustration and application, rather than as prophecies which have received fulfillment. Enough, however, remains to justify the Messianic sense of

the psalm, provided our interpretation be fair and sober. . . . The history of prophets and holy men of old is a typical history. They were, it may be said, representative men, suffering and hoping, not for themselves only, but for the nation whom they represented. In their sufferings they were feeble and transient images of the great sufferer who by his sufferings accomplished man's redemption; their hopes could never be fully realized but in the issue of his work, nor their aspirations be truly uttered save by his mouth. But confessions of sinfulness and imprecations of vengeance, mingling with these better hopes and aspirations, are a beacon to guide us in our interpretation. They teach us that the psalm is not a prediction; that the psalmist does not put himself in the place of the Messiah to come. They show us that here, as indeed in all Scriptures, two streams, the human and the divine, flow on in the same channel. They seem to remind us that, if the prophets and minstrels of old were types of the great teacher of the church, yet they were so only in some respects, and not altogether. They bear witness to the imperfection of those by whom God spake in time past unto the fathers, in many portions and in many ways, even whilst they point to him who is the living Word, the perfect revelation of the Father.

The following remark of Dr. E. P. Barrows shows the method of interpretation resorted to by the Exclusive Messianists, and its unreasonableness.

Those who apply these psalms exclusively to Christ assume that these confessions of sin are made in a *vicarious* way, the Messiah assuming the character of a sinner because "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."[4] But

[4] Isa. 53 : 6.

the form of these confessions forbids such an interpretation. When the psalmist says, "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me," "O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee," we cannot understand such language of anything else than personal sinfulness.

We are now prepared to examine the particular quotations from this psalm. In ver. 4 it reads: "*They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head.*" In John 15 : 25 Christ is represented as saying: "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause." The quotation is probably from the psalm, and presents our Lord as receiving in himself the full violence of the senseless and unreasonable hatred which God's servant of old had incurred to some extent. The psalmist was an imperfect type. In Christ was the illustration, and the culmination of what unjustifiable opposition and enmity could do against its object. His lot was in the fullest sense the lot of the righteous in a world of sin. Of him, as of no other being, could it be truthfully said, "They hated him without a cause."

Geikie paraphrases Christ's words as follows: "Yet this hatred of me by the unbelieving world is not a mere accident or chance, but was foreseen by God and spoken of in ancient prophecy, as you read, 'They hated me without a cause.'"

In ver. 9 it is written: "*For the zeal of thine*

house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me." In the second chapter of John's Gospel, after Christ's severe denunciation of the money changers in the temple, and his expulsion of them from the sacred edifice, it is added by the evangelist: "His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for thy house shall eat me up.'" The future tense is the authorized reading, and John evidently uses the future to show that he considers the psalm Messianic, and that the remarkable conduct of Christ is a proof that he is the Messiah, and that the prediction is fulfilled in him. Prof. C. H. Toy says:

> The psalm passage was remembered and quoted by the disciples when they saw their Master, heedless of the consequences to himself, engaged in driving away the polluters of the temple enclosure. The psalm was regarded as Messianic, and this occurrence in the life of Jesus as the fulfillment of a prediction. Hence the evangelist felt himself warranted in writing "shall eat me up."

It may be replied that John took no unwarranted liberties with the text. Prophecy was often expressed in Hebrew by the perfect tense, as if the events had already taken place. See the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. The remainder of the verse is quoted in Rom. 15 : 3 as especially applicable to the Saviour, "For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."

In ver. 12, "*They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards,*" is believed to be a foreshadowing of the mocking treatment of Christ by the drunken Roman soldiers in the pretorium, as recorded in Matt. 27 : 27–30.

In ver. 20 and 21 we read: "*Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.*" This language seems little less than an accurate and sympathetic description of the crucifixion of our Saviour, and the scenes connected with it, his breaking heart—which many believe to be a physical fact—his crushing grief and loneliness, his desertion even by his disciples, his mute and vain appeal for pity and comfort, all of which, we are told, took place "that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled," [1] and the literal presentation of vinegar and gall to his thirsty lips.[2] This seems like a bit of narrative taken from one of the Gospels. Had the psalmist been present as an eye-witness, his account might have been fuller, but it could not have been more accurate. No one can read these words without the conviction that, however true they may have been to the experience of the psalmist, they found a remarkably

[1] Matt. 26 : 56. [2] Matt. 27 : 30–34.

literal fulfillment in the experience of the Son of God.

Reference has already been made to the fact that the language of ver. 22 and 23 is quoted by the Apostle Paul,[1] as finding its fulfillment in the judicial blindness and rejection of the Jews because of their repudiation of their own Messiah, and also to the fact that the Apostle Peter cites with some freedom verse twenty-five as foretelling the doom of Judas Iscariot. All these citations abundantly establish the Messianic character of the psalm, although, as has been said, the distinctly human element is a prominent feature of it.

The seventy-eighth Psalm has two verses which are quoted in the New Testament, viz, the second and the twenty-fourth. The second verse reads: "*I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old*," or, I will disclose the secret lessons of the past. The psalmist declares his purpose to impart important instruction from the lessons of the history of God's people, the term "parable" being used, as has been said, "with large latitude in the Old Testament," as covering illustrations, sententious remarks, and any form of didactic, poetic literature. The Evangelist Matthew, having recorded several of Christ's instructive parables, finds in the great Teacher and in his method

[1] Rom. 11 : 9, 10; see also 2 Cor. 3 : 14.

of imparting truth, a beautiful illustration and fulfillment of the psalmist's words. In 13 : 34, 35 he says: "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." This quotation is from the Septuagint, and is quite free, though it does not depart from the meaning of the original. The words of the psalm announce the method of instruction which God, who was speaking in them by his Spirit, employed in teaching the people. The writer of the Gospel, as he sees Christ's method of presenting truth, is not only reminded of the psalmist's statement, but evidently confesses his belief that the statement was prophetic, and was being fulfilled in Christ and his method of teaching. Doctor Broadus says of the phrase, "that it might be fulfilled":

> This expression requires us to understand a real fulfillment of a real prediction—unless that idea could be shown to be in the given case impossible—and a fulfillment designedly brought about in the course of providence. . . The evangelist states it as a part of the divine purpose, in our Lord's adoption of the parabolic method of instruction, that there should be a fulfillment of that prophetic saying. Unless we can show that there was no such prophetic relation, we must certainly accept the evangelist's statement.

Another view of the quotation is given by Perowne who says:

> How are we to understand the quotation made by St. Matthew of this passage, who sees a fulfillment of it in the parables spoken by our Lord? It cannot be supposed for a moment that these words were a prediction of our Lord's mode of teaching, or that he himself is here the speaker. But here, as elsewhere, that which the Old Testament prophet says of himself, finds its fittest expression, its highest realization, in the great Prophet of the kingdom of heaven.

This view does not seem to meet the full demands of the language of the evangelist, which evidently refers to a divine purpose expressed in the words of the psalm, which found a fulfillment in the teaching of Christ.

In ver. 24 we read, "*And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given of the corn of heaven.*" The Jews, when Christ was pressing upon them his claims upon their faith in his divine character and mission, cited the language of the psalm, or the substance of it, and demanded of Christ some similar sign and divine credential. "They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat."[1] It was the Jews who cited these words from their own Scriptures.

[1] John 6 : 30, 31.

Dr. Hovey says on this passage :

> The mention of food that does not perish, but endureth unto eternal life, reminds them of the manna that was given to their fathers, when under the leadership of Moses, and they at once intimate the propriety of a similar blessing from Jesus. If he will give them, by miracle, not barley bread and fishes only, but the food of angels, they may receive him as the Messiah, greater than Moses.

Christ replied deliberately, "Verily, verily, I say unto you," claiming that the manna though supernatural in its origin, was plainly a type of himself, who was the genuine bread of God, who both came down from heaven and was to give life to the hungry world, and not simply to the starving Israelites. "It was not Moses that gave you the bread out of heaven," but God. That bread, however, was limited in amount, and circumscribed in its distribution, and perishable in its nature, and food only for the body. It was hardly worthy to be called the bread of heaven. It was only a type of what was to come, only the material shadow of the spiritual substance. "But my Father giveth you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world." The Jews saw only the local miracle and the glory of their great prophet. Christ saw the prophetic type of himself, heavenly in origin, life-giving in its properties, and adequate for a famishing world.

Geikie has the following instructive paragraph on the manna of the wilderness as a type of Christ :

> The miracle of the manna had become a subject of the proudest remembrances and fondest legends of the nation. "God," says the Talmud, "made manna to descend for them, in which were all manner of tastes. Every Israelite found in it what best pleased him. The young tasted bread, the old honey, and the children oil." It had become a fixed belief that the Messiah, when he came, would signalize his advent by a repetition of this stupendous miracle. . . It was thus only an expression of the public feeling of the day, when Jesus was asked to repeat the descent of manna—the greatest of the miracles of Moses. . . But Jesus, at all times resolute in withholding miraculous action for any personal end, had not thought of satisfying their craving for wonders. "Moses, indeed," said he, "gave you manna, but it was not the true Bread of Heaven." He wished to draw them from the merely outward miracle to that far higher wonder even then enacting before their eyes, the free offer of the true Bread of heaven, in the offer of himself as their Saviour.

In Psalm 89 we find promises so far-reaching and grand, that it is impossible to restrict them to King David or Solomon his son. They can only be fulfilled in the character and dominion of great David's greater son and successor, the spiritual King of the spiritual Israel, the divine Messiah. They are substantially the same promises that were given to David and his seed in the second book of Samuel, and as those promises look forward to the universal establishment and glory of the kingdom

of Christ for their perfect fulfillment, so must these. The language of these promises in history and psalm is so similar, and so closely resembles the language of other prophecies in the Old Testament, that it is difficult to tell exactly from which of them the New Testament writers quote.

The psalm opens with these impressive words: "*I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens. I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David, my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations.*" These words are sufficient to prove the Messianic import of the psalm. David was God's chosen one. It was his seed, *i. e.*, Christ, that was to be established forever, and his throne that was to be built up through all generations. We are reminded of the Apostle Paul's language,[1] "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh," and of the angel's annunciation to the Virgin Mary: "And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

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[1] Rom. 1 : 3.

Later in this psalm we find such expressions as these: "*Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David, my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him. . . And in my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers* [showing the unlimited extent of his possessions]. *He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. . . His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.*" This language is thoroughly pervaded with the Christ-thought. It is shot through and through with the Messianic idea.

The quotations may be more of sentiment than of language, but the language is not wholly wanting in the Christian Scriptures. The psalm says, "I have laid help on one that is mighty." The Epistle says, "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto him." The psalm says, "With my holy oil have I anointed him." The Gospel says, "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Anointed." The psalm says, "In my name shall his horn be exalted." The Gospel says, "And hath raised up a horn of salvation for

us in the house of his servant David." This psalm says, "I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers." Another psalm says of the Messiah, "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." The psalm says, "He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God." The Gospel says, "I ascend to my Father and to your Father, to my God and to your God." The psalm says, "I will make him my firstborn." One Epistle says, "That he might be the firstborn among many brethren," and again another Epistle says, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature." The psalm says, "I will make him higher than the kings of the earth." The Gospel says, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest," and the Epistle says, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." The psalm says, "His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." The Revelation says, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Since David and Solomon are both acknowledged to be types of Christ, and in view of the extravagance of such language when applied to them, and the resemblance of thought and language when applied to Christ, the Messianic character of the psalm is clearly apparent.

In Ps. 96 : 13 it is declared, "*He shall judge the world with righteousness.*" The same language is used in Ps. 98 : 9. Both of these psalms point forward to the universal and blessed reign of Christ, a distinguishing feature of which will be that all judgment will be administered in absolute equity. This will exalt the Messianic dispensation, when its fullness shall have been brought in, above all human administration of authority and justice. Now, everywhere in the New Testament Christ is held up in his judicial character and office. He himself said,[1] "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." And in harmony with this claim of Christ, the Apostle Paul, in his famous discourse on Mars Hill, in that city of Grecian culture and grossest idolatry, used the very language of the psalm, and determined its Messianic application, when he said : "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath

[1] John 5 : 22.

given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

In Ps. 97 : 7 is found the following sentence: "*Worship him, all ye gods.*" This is a dramatic appeal evidently to all heathen idols to bow down and worship at the feet of Jehovah, or as this psalm is obviously Messianic in its anticipative expressions, at the feet of Messiah. The Septuagint version renders this sentence, "Worship him, all ye his angels." Some interpreters have supposed that this was the original of Heb. 1 : 6: "And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." But the weight of authority is in favor of finding the original in the Septuagint rendering of Deut. 32 : 43, so that the passage does not come under our consideration.

In Ps. 102 there is a sublime declaration of the eternity and immutability of God (ver. 25–27): "*Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*" These words are quoted in Heb. 1 : 10–12, as directly applicable to Christ. The writer of the Epistle is proving the infinite superiority of Christ to angelic beings, and his oneness with God. He

calls him "the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person." He ascribes to him creative power, and the almighty sustaining energy by which all things are upheld. Having ascribed to him these attributes of Deity, he completes the expression of his faith in the full divinity of Christ by declaring his eternal sovereignty and the unchangeableness of his Being: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," "Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." He quotes in the process of his argument in this chapter from no less than six psalms, with the fullest confidence in their Messianic import and in the validity of his reasoning, and in its force in the minds of those to whom he wrote. Of this quotation Kuenen says: "It is difficult to say what has led the writer to this interpretation." Not at all. The writer having connected Christ with the whole universe of worlds as their almighty Creator and Upholder, it was the most natural thing in the world for him to contrast now their perishableness and transient nature with the eternity and immutability of him who made them all. He chose his quotation from a psalm that is in other parts obviously Messianic, and to him there was no distinction between the Messiah of the New Testament and Jehovah of the Old, so that language originally spoken of Jehovah was equally applicable to Christ. He accepted Christ's own words as to his nature, "I and my Father are one."

Dr. Franklin Johnson has well said :

A glance at the psalm itself will show why it is thus applied, for it is distinctively Messianic in those parts which refer to the future action of God in saving men. . . The psalm was probably written during the Babylonian captivity, or soon after it, and the predictions of future deliverance refer primarily to the return of the nation from exile, or the escape from the distress immediately succeeding it. But the view of the prophet sweeps far beyond this period, and his expressions depict a future more glorious than the restoration of the tribes to their own land, or than the highest prosperity which they attained afterward. "The nations," the Gentiles, are to "fear the name of Jehovah, and the kings of the earth his glory." "The peoples," the Gentiles again, are to "be gathered together, and the kingdoms to serve Jehovah." Even after the heavens and the earth have passed away, the children of God "shall continue, and their seed shall be established." The psalm, thus, is typical, looking to the return of national prosperity, and making this the foreshadowing of the kingdom of the Messiah, in its universal extent and its eternal duration, Jehovah should accomplish all this, the Jehovah who laid the foundations of the earth, who formed the heavens with his hands, who shall remove all these his works, and who shall endure forever after they are destroyed. The psalmist looked forward to what Jehovah would do, the writer to the Hebrews to what he had done ; the one beheld Jehovah, the other Christ ; they are therefore essentially one and the same Being, according to the uniform teaching of the New Testament.

In Ps. 118 : 22, 23 is found a statement which is familiar to all readers of the New Testament : "*The stone which the builders refused is become the head*

stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes." The occasion of this psalm has been variously understood, Ewald, Hengstenberg, Delitzsch, and Stier each suggesting a different one. It was undoubtedly written for some great festival, and in commemoration of some great event. It was one of the series of psalms sung at the Passover. It recounts the restoration of God's people after a period of humiliation and apparent rejection. The allusion to the rejected stone, and its recovery and exaltation to the place of honor, may have been a proverb. If the psalm was written after the exile, and found its occasion in the building of the second temple, the proverb found an application in the rehabilitation of the Jews by the favor of God after they had been despised by the nations. Cheyne says: "An old proverb in a new light. The stone means Israel, which contrary to all human probability had again become prominent in the complex organization of peoples. The builders are non-Israelites, who would fain have arranged the world to their liking." He makes no reference to Christ's use of the proverb, and sees in it no Messianic application.

The psalm to the Jews had its Messianic features, as we shall soon see, and Christ found in this proverb a reference and application to himself.[1] He

[1] Matt. 21 : 42; Mark 12 : 10, 11; Luke 20 : 17.

turned it against the Jewish nation of his day, as a prophetic intimation of their treatment of him, and in spite of that, of his exaltation to be a Prince and a Saviour, the corner-stone of God's spiritual temple, of the true Israel who should be saved. Peter in his brave defense before the hostile authorities of Jerusalem, being "filled with the Holy Ghost," it is said ;[2] and again in his First Epistle,[3] under the inspiration of the same divine Spirit, makes use of the Saviour's interpretation and personal application of the psalmist's words, and distinctly asserts that they were a prophecy of the coming Messiah, of the treatment which he should receive at the hands of the Jews, and of his full endorsement by God and enthronement as the world's only Redeemer. The Jews might reject him and repudiate his Messianic claims ; indeed, it was preannounced that they would do so ; but notwithstanding, there was "none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." The stone might be disallowed by those who professed to be the builders of true religion in the world ; but nevertheless it was the "elect" stone of God, laid in Zion by his own hand, and "precious" alike to him and to all who through faith should build upon it.

Geikie unfolds the significance of the proverb and its application as follows :

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[1] Acts 4 : 11. [2] 2 : 6, 7.

The meaning was clear. The corner-stone of the kingdom of God, of which those in his presence claimed to be the chief men, was, in their own mode of speech, only a figurative name for the Messiah, on whom its existence and completion depended, as a building depends on its foundation and support. The psalm quoted had been sung, it is believed, by Israel on the first feast of Tabernacles after the return from captivity. Its historical reference was primarily to the Jewish nation—rejected by the heathen, but chosen again by God as the foundation of his earthly kingdom; but in a higher spiritual sense, the rabbis themselves understood it of the Messiah, and thus there could be no doubt in the mind of any Jew, that when now applied by Christ to himself, it was a direct claim of Messianic dignity.

Christ adds, in order to emphasize the serious consequences of unbelief and rejection of him, of which some men seem to think so little, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Reference may have been had to the language of Isa. 8 : 14, which is certainly quoted by Peter in the same connection,[1] where he calls it "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence." The corner-stone which has been cast aside, may be in the way, and men may stumble over it to their serious injury, or in casting it aside men may pull it over upon themselves, and it fall upon them with crushing weight. In either case the result is disastrous.

Doctor Broadus says upon this passage:

[1] 1 Peter 2 : 8.

He who in unbelief finds this stone an obstacle, smites against it and falls, will not only be bruised by the fall, but broken in pieces. If he stumbles over Jesus as unfit to be a Saviour, all his religious hopes will be utterly destroyed. In the second clause the image is somewhat changed. The stone is here conceived not as a foundation stone, but as placed higher up in the corner, perhaps at the top, and some one tries to pull it down from its place; but it falls upon him, and scatters him like a puff of dust. [There is no necessity of suggesting the slightest change of the figure. Men are not infrequently crushed in handling a foundation stone.] Jesus came to be the Messiah; the Jews reject him, and thereby utterly lose the Messianic felicity. He is notwithstanding placed by God as the corner-stone of salvation; the Jews try to pull him down, to defeat the divine plan by putting him to death, but in falling he will scatter like chaff their schemes and themselves. They will have not only the loss which comes from stumbling at him, but the terrible destruction which comes from pulling him down on their heads; while he, divinely replaced, will forever remain the corner-stone of human salvation.

Such is the Messianic interpretation of the passage in the psalm as given by the Messiah himself and his apostles, and such is the solemn warning, to Gentiles as well as Jews, against the willful rejection of Jesus Christ.

In ver. 26 of this psalm we read, "*Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*" These words are quoted with slightly varying additions by each of the four evangelists.[1] They appear in the ac-

[1] Matt. 21 : 9; Mark 11 : 9; Luke 19 : 38; John 12 : 13.

counts of the public entry of Christ into Jerusalem, the Sunday before his crucifixion. It was the one occasion in his earthly life when our Lord received something of the recognition and honor which belonged to him. He whose weary feet had often traversed in all humility the rough roads of Judea, now for once came riding with some little appearance of state and dignity, in fulfillment of a distinct prophetic utterance.[1] The multitude moved by some mysterious impulse, crowded upon him, and followed after in lengthening procession. Their hearts were stirred to unwonted enthusiasm. They tore the branches from the trees and scattered them in the way. They carpeted the road with the clothing hastily stripped from their shoulders. The thought swelled within them that the national hope was about to be realized, that the faith which had been kept alive for centuries had come to its fulfillment and blessed reward. They could no longer repress their emotions. They filled the air with their shouts and acclamations of praise. One voice expressed the thought, and all tongues were unloosed, and from end to end of the procession the cry went up, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Edersheim, in "The Life and Times of Jesus the

[1] Matt. 21 : 4, 5 and Zech. 9 : 9.

Messiah," has given a very graphic description of this incident. He says:

> We can imagine it all, how the fire would leap from heart to heart. So he was the promised Son of David—and the kingdom was at hand! It may have been just as the precise point of the road was reached when "the city of David" first suddenly emerges into view, "at the descent of the mount of Olives," "that the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen." As the burning words of joy and praise, the record of what they had seen, passed from mouth to mouth, and they caught their first sight of "the city of David," adorned as a bride to welcome her King, Davidic praise to David's Greater Son wakened the echoes of old Davidic psalms in the morning light of their fulfillment.

It was a thrilling and significant scene in the life of Christ, and must have produced a profound impression upon the multitude, and upon Christ himself, who saw as the multitude did not, but as we now know, that his death was only five days distant, that his triumphal ride was toward his crucifixion and shame. The scene has been pictured for us in the immortal lines of Milman's impressive hymn:

> Ride on! ride on in majesty!
> Hark! all the tribes Hosanna cry!
> Thine humble beast pursues his road,
> With palms and scattered garments strewed.
>
> Ride on! ride on in majesty!
> In lowly pomp ride on to die!

O Christ, thy triumphs now begin
O'er captive death and conquered sin.

Ride on! ride on in majesty!
The wingèd squadrons of the sky
Look down with sad and wondering eyes
To see the approaching sacrifice.

Ride on! ride on in majesty!
The last and fiercest strife is nigh;
The Father on his sapphire throne
Expects his own anointed Son.

Ride on! ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die!
Bow thy meek head to mortal pain!
Then take, O God, thy power and reign.

But what gave to the scene its peculiar significance? It was the words that burst from the lips of the multitude, the quotation from their familiar psalm, which had always been applied to their coming King Messiah. They had found the living application for which they had impatiently waited. The divine prophecy had come to its fulfillment. It was an open acknowledgment of the Messianic character of Jesus. He was David's promised Son and Lord, in whom the expectations of the nation were centered, clothed with divine authority to bring in his glorious reign, and as they believed, to re-establish his throne forever. The word "hosanna" meant originally, "Save, we beseech thee," and was a contraction of the previous verse of the

psalm (ver. 25). To the Jews who uttered these words, and to the Jews who heard them, there could have been but one meaning, viz, an acknowledgment of the prophetic character of the words of the psalm, and a distinct recognition of their reference to the lowly man riding before them.

Godet interprets this remarkable scene in the following words:

> The cries of the multitude leave no doubt as to the meaning of this demonstration; it was, indeed, the Messiah whom the people welcomed and saluted in the person of Jesus. The acclamations reported by St. John 12 : 13, and for which equivalents are given by the synoptists, are taken from Psalm 118, especially ver. 25, 26. Numerous rabbinic quotations prove this psalm to have been regarded as Messianic. Every Israelite knew these words by heart; they were sung at the feast of Tabernacles, in the procession made round the altar, and at the Passover, after the singing of the great Hallel, Ps. 113–118, at the close of the repast. Hosanna (*save, I beseech thee*) is a prayer addressed to God by the theocratic people on behalf of its King Messiah; it is, if we may venture so to speak, the Israelite *God save the King*.

Ellicott in his discussion of this incident says in conclusion:

> Such was the triumphal entry into Jerusalem; such the most striking event, considered with reference to the nation, on which we have as yet meditated. It was no less than a public recognition of Jesus of Nazareth as the long-looked-for Messiah, the long and passionately expected theocratic King.

This accounts for the indignation of the Pharisees who stood by. To them the use of those sacred words by the disciples, and their application to Jesus was nothing less than blasphemy, as they thought the Master himself would acknowledge, and so they said, "Master, rebuke thy disciples." But Jesus, instead of repudiating the interpretation and conduct of the disciples, approved and accepted it in the most emphatic and unmistakable manner, saying unto those blind objectors, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace," if they should fail to see in me your foretold Messiah, and the fulfillment of these words which they have spoken, even inanimate nature would arouse itself to testify in my behalf, "the stones would immediately cry out," as if in forced and intelligent acknowledgment of my divine character and claims.

Neander, recognizing the unmistakable significance and full force of this Messianic welcome to Christ, and the nature of the rebuke administered to those who would have forbidden it, says:

> An event had occurred, so lofty and so pregnant with the best interests of mankind, that it might rouse even the dullest to rejoice. In the mouth of any other, even the greatest of *men*, these words (as to the spontaneous testimony of the stones) would have been an unjustifiable self-exaltation; uttered by *him*, they show the weighty import which he gave to his manifestation. Christ's conduct in this respect, moreover, shows that such an entry into Jerusalem formed part of his plan.

A little later, probably the next day, according to Matthew's record,[1] Christ appeared in the temple, and gave fresh proof of his Messiahship by casting out the profane traffickers, and vindicating the honor of his Father's house, and performing anew his mighty miracles. Again, the children took up the Messianic greeting, and again the anger of the priests and scribes was kindled against him, and they cried out indignantly, "Hearest thou what these say?" And again Christ accepted the ascription of Messianic honor as rightfully belonging to him, and claimed the fulfillment of another prophetic utterance, contained in their Holy Scriptures,[2] in which the simple minds of children are made to recognize his divine glory, and their lisping tongues to proclaim his praise, to the shame of the blind prejudice and proud godlessness of his rejecters. On this fresh outburst of praise on the one hand, and enmity on the other, Geikie remarks:

> His bold appearance in the temple itself especially filled the priestly dignitaries and rabbis with indignation, all the deeper because they dared not arrest him for fear of the crowds, even when now in their very hand. That the children should hail him as the Messiah, also enraged them. "Hearest thou not what these say?" asked some of them. But instead of disavowing the supreme honor ascribed to him, he only replied that he did. "But,"

[1] Matt. 21 : 12–16. [2] Ps. 8 : 2.

added he, "have ye never read in your Scriptures, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou (Jehovah) hast perfected praise, that thou mightest put to shame thine enemies, and silence thy foes, and those who rage against thee?"

Subsequently in Christ's severe arraignment of Jerusalem and heart-broken lament over its doom, he repeated the application of this psalm-prophecy to himself, saying:[1] "For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," acknowledging me to be the Messiah, as my disciples and the children of Jerusalem have already done. After his resurrection they saw him no more; and the veil is still upon their faces, and upon the faces of all persons of our time throughout the Christian world, who see not him upon whom the abundant light of Old Testament prophecy, shining from so many books, converges in convincing splendor, and who do not reverently, believingly, rejoicingly join in the old acclamation: "Hosanna to the son of David and the Son of God. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!"

[1] Matt. 23 : 39.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

X

Conclusion

We have now passed in review the psalms which are denominated Messianic, having examined particularly those entire psalms which are quoted at length in the New Testament as referring to Christ, whatever local application they may have had, having analyzed other specimen psalms which, though not quoted by New Testament writers, are nevertheless pervaded with the Messianic spirit and rich with the Messianic hope; and having critically studied all of those separate verses within the limits of the sacred Hebrew Psalter, which the Christian Scriptures have declared to be prophetic utterances of the coming, the character, and the mission of the Son of God. All these numerous passages have set before us with the utmost clearness, and sometimes with remarkable minuteness, the person, the divine character, the human descent, the humiliation and sufferings, the exaltation and glory, the priestly service and the royal dignity, of the Messiah, and also the world-wide triumph and blessedness of his kingdom. There is hardly a feature of the New Testament picture of Christ as Prophet, Priest, and Divine King, and of his redemptive work for the

human race, which was not pre-announced in this book of religious hymns. A systematic treatise might almost be compiled from these sublime songs.

Yet it should be remembered that these sacred songs contain but a small part of the Messianic prophecies. They abound also in other portions of the Old Testament, and are equally clear in their import, and are in like manner quoted by Christ and the writers of the New Testament as applicable to our Lord. In the aggregate they number not less than three hundred.

If it be said that it was the Messianic idea which prevailed in the time of Christ that determined this Messianic interpretation of the Old Testament Scriptures, it may be replied that the Messianic idea was as old as the Hebrew race, that it prevailed when the Jewish Scriptures were written, all along the centuries of their composition, having been created, if we may accept the statements of the Scriptures, by the Holy Spirit of God, and having been kept alive and powerful by the inspired Scriptures of their faith. So that instead of its being a new and later idea interpreting itself into the old records, it was the old records that gave reality and vividness and an indestructible vitality to the Messianic idea.

Rev. Stanley Leathes, speaking of the early origin and permanence of the Messianic idea among the Jewish nation, says :

It may, however, be asserted that this characteristic of the Jewish literature is not the cause but the effect of the inborn consciousness of the nation. And we readily grant it. The literature itself implies no less, being, as it is, in a great degree a record of the manner in which that consciousness arose. . . What I am anxious to maintain, however, is just this, that for my argument it matters not whether the writings cherished the consciousness or the consciousness produced the writings, the fact remains substantially the same, that in these writings there is to be discovered, upon the testimony of the nation who preserved them, and upon the authority of our Lord and his apostles, a mass of recorded history, teaching, and prophecy, which has direct reference to a Messiah.

Much has been written, and truthfully, with reference to the hopes and longings which pervaded the ancient world, "the prophetic utterances, announcing better times and a coming deliverance." There was a providential preparation of the nations for Christ, the Messiah, outside of the Jewish nation. These "prophetic utterances" of the heathen world lack the clearness, the positiveness, the divine authentication, and the multiplicity of those contained in the Hebrew Scriptures; but they cannot be ignored in estimating the reality and the value of the Jewish predictions. Among the Chinese, the Indians, and the Persians they were not wanting. They take on a remarkable definiteness and personality among the Greeks and the Romans. Plato's remarkable connection of the coming redemption with a suffering righteous man is well

known, and also the significant prophecy which has made the fourth eclogue of Virgil famous. But in the words of Luthardt: "It was not only by the words of individuals that such yearnings were expressed. A tone of prophecy, a feature of yearning, a presentiment of truth, pervades all heathenism." Giving due weight to this expectant condition of the world, the same author ascribes to the Jewish nation a peculiar pre-eminence, as a people chosen by God to receive and make known his purpose of redemption for mankind, and its method through a personal Messiah:

> Israel was the nation of hope. Ancient prophecies of a redemption and a Redeemer to come, existed among this people, and ever kept their view directed to the future. From the remotest ages men had been acquainted with a prophetic promise proceeding from the mouth of God—the prophecy of the woman's seed, which was to bruise the serpent's head. The final victory of man over the power of evil upon earth, through a son of man, was promised by this saying, which pointed to the obscure future. All subsequent prophecies were in substance but further developments of this primitive one. . . These assumed a form ever-increasingly definite, while their fulfillment was confined to an ever-narrowing circle—to the seed of Abraham, the tribe of Judah, the house of David. The Blessing of the nations, the warlike Hero, the King whose dominion was to be victorious and peaceable, is their subject. . . This future was to be introduced by a new and great revelation of Jehovah, the bearer of which was as the end of preceding history, to close up prophecy in himself,

and possess the fullness of the Spirit of God, to be the true High Priest, and the true and final King, who was also to attain to glory through sufferings, and to bring upon all the nations of the earth the happy, glorious, and peaceful government of God. This is the one great theme of all the prophecies.

A hope that had been kindled by God, according to their accepted tradition, at the very beginning of human history, when God said,[1] "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," though often disappointed, and sometimes undoubtedly assuming a false shape, as it did in the minds of many at the time of Christ's advent, had been constantly fostered by the Spirit of God through many centuries, had survived exile and bondage and weary wanderings, to say nothing of spiritual degeneracy and empty formalism, and had found expression in all their sacred literature, until at last in the fullness of time there were devout men, like aged Simeon, to whom, it is significantly said, "it was revealed by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ," who took the living divine Fulfillment in his arms and cried with supreme and blessed satisfaction, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

To the objection that the Messianic hope was of late origin, and that it sought to buttress itself by a

[1] Gen. 3 : 15.

new interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures, a convincing reply is made by Edersheim in his "Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah." He says :

> If the Messianic hope had sprung up during or immediately after the exile, we should scarcely have expected it to cluster round the house of David, nor to center in the "Son of David." For nothing is more marked than the decadence, and almost disappearance, of the house of David in that period. A national hope of this kind could scarcely have sprung up, when the royalty of David was not only matter of the past, but when its restoration was comparatively so little thought of, or desired, that the descendants of the Davidic house seem in great measure to have become lost in the mass of the people. And the argument becomes all the stronger as we notice how, with the lapse of time, the Davidic line became increasingly an historical remembrance or a theological idea rather than a present power or reality. Throughout the Old Testament Davidic descent is always the most prominent in all Messianic pictures, while in later writings it recedes into the background as something in the long past which must be brought forth anew. In this respect, also, it is characteristic that the name, "Son of David," was the most distinctive title claimed by and given to Jesus, while in the case of all spurious Messianic movements this occupied only a subordinate, if any, place.

As has been already intimated, these ancient seers, who "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," did not always comprehend the full import of their utterances. They were God's mouthpieces. Their words had a local and intelli-

gible reference, and then swept far down through the centuries to some vaster fulfillment, which God, to whom one day is as a thousand years, clearly foresaw, but to which their vision did not always extend. There have been unwilling prophets like Balaam, and unconscious prophets like Caiaphas, and prophets whose vision was sometimes limited and dim, like David and Isaiah and Daniel and Malachi, who after all their inquiry and investigation, still knew that the words they uttered were pregnant with a meaning that stretched out into the far future and had to do with the faith and the life of remote generations. This was what the Apostle Peter meant when he said: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."

These words contain the distinct declaration that those in old time who spoke for God, and were his messengers in the gradual unfolding of the great

plan of human redemption, possessed only a limited knowledge and a limited vision, and after all their diligent and devout inquiry into the definite purport of their utterances, which were inspired by the ever-living spirit of Christ, they only knew that they were speaking for future generations, and that other eyes than theirs should look upon the final and glorious fulfillment, and that other hearts than theirs should feel the glow and the splendor of that bright day of which they were the prophetic morning stars. This is the uniform opinion of all believers in Old Testament inspiration and prophecy.

Dr. Broadus very justly remarks :

> Many prophecies received fulfillments which the prophet does not appear to have at all contemplated. But as God's providence often brought about the fulfillment, though the human actors were heedless or even ignorant of the predictions they fulfilled, so God's Spirit often contemplated fulfillments of which the prophet had no conception, but which the evangelist makes known. And it is of a piece with the general development of revelation that the later inspiration should explain the records of the earlier inspiration, and that only after the events have occurred should the earlier predictions of them be understood.

And this is of a piece also with the general development of history, if we believe, as we must, that God has to do with the lives of men and of nations, and with the general progress of the race toward a definite goal. The events of to-day, and even the

utterances of to-day, may be dimly prophetic of the future and of a new order and a coming condition, and will be better understood in the clearer light of the coming time than they possibly can be now, just as we, who are farther down the stream of time, understand past events and past history better than the actors in them did. Every man and every nation, working in harmony with God and his unfolding providence, is in some sense, whether conscious of it or not, fulfilling the past and at the same time a prophet of the future. Tennyson has given to us a true interpretation of history and of life in the words :

> Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
> And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns.

God works no otherwise. In the progress of specific revelation, as in the progress of humanity, it is prediction and fulfillment, prediction and fulfillment ; the later interpreters, whose hearts are illumined by the Spirit of God, unfolding and applying the utterances of the earlier prophets, who spake as they were moved by the same Spirit, though the full meaning of their words they may not have perfectly comprehended.

In our study of the Messianic psalms we have accepted the interpretation of Christ and the New

Testament writers as correct and authoritative. It has not seemed necessary or wise or justifiable to question that. Indeed, to do so is inevitably to undermine all faith in their authority as teachers of ethical and religious truth. Their interpretation of the teachings of the Old Testament formed an essential and integral part of their religious system. Upon it they based their doctrine of God, of sin, of salvation, and of life everlasting. If they are open to criticism at this vital point, and are chargeable with errors and false interpretations, can we have confidence in them at any point? Who shall say where their fallibility ceases and their infallibility begins? Or who shall say that they have any infallibility at all, and can be accepted as divinely commissioned and authoritative expounders of religious truth? To believe Christ and the apostles to be untrustworthy in the use of what they believed to be the word of God is to fill the mind with a universal suspicion and doubt.

It has been said by Prof. C. H. Toy, that we "must distinguish between the biblical interpretation of the evangelists and apostles, and their authority as historians and teachers of ethics and religion." In other words, their interpretations may be faulty and false, but the doctrines derived from those interpretations may be accepted as absolutely and unquestionably true, a position which seems strangely inconsistent and untenable. The same

strictures, moreover, are applied to our Lord himself. Professor Toy says :

> As an individual man, he had of necessity a definite, restricted intellectual outfit and outlook ; and these could be only those of his day and generation. . . Why should Christ be supposed to know the science of the criticism of the Old Testament, which began to exist centuries after his death ? . . . Christ follows the hermeneutical principles and shares the hermeneutical opinions of his day. . . We cannot assume Christ's teaching and his interpretation of the Old Testament to be final authority. . . The science of hermeneutics is the final authority when it seems to us to come in conflict with him. . . The Bible itself nowhere teaches that a holy man, sent with a message from God, or a son of God, the embodiment of the divine [by which is evidently meant Jesus Christ, the Son of God] would be lifted above the ordinary conditions of human life.

All of which is entirely contrary to the facts in the case, and flatly contradicted by the claims of Christ and the teachings of the New Testament. Jesus Christ was lifted above the ordinary conditions of human life. It has been found impossible to classify him. Though he was an actual historical character, and lived at a definite period in the history of the Jewish nation and of the world, and in a well understood age, he was infinitely superior to his age and to any age, and possessed attributes and characteristics which separated him by an immeasurable distance from the men of his time and of all times. He was absolutely sinless. Surely

this counts for something in estimating a person's relations to God and truth and his authority as a teacher. He spake as never man spake and as one having authority. He wrought miracles, having power over all diseases and organic defects and over the forces of nature, yea, even over death itself. His incarnation and resurrection, both well attested and impregnable facts, clothe with a supernatural halo his whole earthly manifestation. He took upon himself human nature. He was in some true, though mysterious sense, one of us. Yet he was above us, human and at the same time divine. He was the Son of man and the Son of God, not *a* Son of man but *the* Son of man, as if he was the offspring, not of an earthly father and mother, but the offspring of humanity; and not *a* Son of God, as if he was simply one of a race created in God's image and in some sense his offspring, but *the* Son of God, pre-eminently, peculiarly, exceptionally, the Son of God, "the only begotten Son of God." To take any other view of Christ, and attempt to put him on a level with the men of his time, and circumscribe him by the restrictions of his time, is to fly in the face of the inspired records. A hermeneutical science that undertakes to do this shows itself to be no science. It proclaims its own fallibility and untrustworthiness.

Moreover, Christ was not only possessed of per-

fect sinlessness and miraculous power, but also of divine wisdom. He knew what was in men, their unuttered thoughts and motives. He knew the death of Lazarus before it was announced, and saw Nathanael under the fig tree. He predicted his own death and resurrection and the destruction of Jerusalem. All this was vastly different from ordinary or extraordinary insight or far-sight or foresight. It was of the nature of omniscience. More than this. He not only knew what was in man, but he knew what was in God, his perfect will and his eternal purpose. He knew that will and purpose as they had been unfolded through the centuries of Jewish history, and as they were then finding their culminating manifestation in his life and death in Judea. Moreover, he was the Word of God, the perfect expression of the mind, the thought, the wisdom of the Almighty, so far as it was necessary for human salvation. He had, also, the miraculous endorsement of the Father, as the absolute and authoritative teacher of truth, who said of him again and again, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye him."

It seems absurd to say that such a being had only "the restricted intellectual outfit and outlook of his day and generation." He himself claimed that his mission on earth was to fulfill that which had been before of typical history and unfolding divine purpose and prophetic intimation, all of

which he must have understood accurately in order to fulfill it. He was constantly pointing to Old Testament incidents as types of himself and to Old Testament language as foreshadowing his coming, his suffering, and his glory. To say that he simply followed the hermeneutical principles of his time, and therefore was restricted and liable to error, that he intentionally, not knowing that it was true, applied language to himself which had no application to him, and allowed his disciples to do so, is an open impeachment of his moral sincerity. It is not a question of intellectual restriction, but of moral integrity. In that memorable walk with the disciples to Emmaus after the resurrection, it is recorded that Jesus said to their doubting minds, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses [or more strictly, from Moses] and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Another has said: "If Luke could have imparted to us the instruction communicated in that discourse, developing the true sense of the prophecies from the opening gospel of Gen. 3 : 15 to the Sun of Righteousness in Mal. 4 : 2, what volumes of groping discussion in later ages might we well have spared!" Yet that fullness of record would have been no protection against that modern

spirit of rash criticism which is ready to deny the accuracy of the gospel-record, and question the final authority of our Lord as an interpreter. If those two disciples had had a suspicion that Christ was talking about what he did not positively know, in applying Messianic prophecy after Messianic prophecy to himself, in all the Scriptures beginning from Moses, instead of their hearts burning within them with devout wonder and adoring gratitude, they would have burned with righteous indignation.

Christ certainly spoke with a confidence born of absolute knowledge, when he asserted the fulfillment in himself of passage after passage of the Jewish Scriptures, finding them in each of the three great divisions into which the sacred books were divided. Just before his ascension into heaven he said to his disciples: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me."

The only basis for ascribing such human limitations to Christ as to make him simply a man of his time, circumscribed in knowledge, restricted in intellectual outlook, bounded by the ordinary conditions of human life, sharing the hermeneutical opinions of his day, right or wrong, as liable to mistakes in interpretation as his neighbors, and indeed guilty of applying to himself and of allow-

ing his disciples to apply to him Old Testament passages which had no application to him, is that one exceptional, solitary, mysterious confession of his, contained in Mark 13 : 32, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." This confession of Christ's, which stands absolutely alone and is limited to a particular event, and is to us irreconcilable with the character of the Son of God everywhere manifest in the Gospels, has been made to justify a supposition of human limitations which he never exhibited, and of liability to errors of which there is no slightest evidence. Whatever may be the explanation of those mysterious words, as mysterious as the union of the human and the divine in Christ's nature and personality, they have been greatly overworked. The inferences sometimes drawn from them are utterly unjustifiable. Prof. John Kennedy says :

> The proper inference from these words is, not that there might be many other things which he did not know, but that if there were other things which he did not know, he would have made the like confession instead of this. We find him actually claiming a knowledge far more wonderful than that which he disclaimed : "All things are delivered unto me of my Father : and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father : neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."[1] The

[1] Matt. 11 : 27.

"all things" delivered to Christ by the Father are explained, in part at least, by words used on other occasions, "all power," "all judgment," the forgiving of sin and the giving of life. Need we wonder that the Apostle Peter should say of him, "Lord, thou knowest all things" ?[1]

This was the impression which Christ made upon his disciples, and upon the men of his day. And this is the impression which a candid reading of his biographies and contemplation of his life and conduct make upon the mind of to-day, the impression not only of superior, but of superhuman wisdom, the possession of that divine fullness of knowledge which constitutes him the absolute Teacher of truth in all things. As Canon Rawlinson says : "If in all this there was not displayed a divine consciousness, knowledge more than human, it is difficult to see how such knowledge could have been manifested."

The indefinite *kenosis* in Phil. 2 : 8 must be determined in view of the facts of Christ's life that are known. We have no other way of understanding what it means. To make it the basis of all sorts of conjectures of ignorance, error, not to say deception, on the part of Christ, as is sometimes done, is utterly unscientific and unjustifiable.

A like authority attaches to the teachings of Christ's disciples, and to their interpretation of the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. They

[1] John 21 : 17.

sat for three years under the careful instruction of their Master, and received from him that training in the truth which was to fit them for its promulgation in the world, as its authoritative teachers. He was constantly "expounding unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself," and constantly "opening their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." They were to go and teach all nations, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." They had the positive and clearly unfolded message of a divine and painstaking Teacher, whose progressive kingdom depended upon the intelligent apprehension and faithfulness of his disciples. And still further, as if to safeguard them from all possibility of error, he gave them the promise of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, whose special office should be to lead these teachers of men into all the truth of God.

To say, then, that we have not in the New Testament, in Christ and his apostles, the final authority in the interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures, is to blind one's eyes to the character and claims of the Son of God, and to make him so liable to human error, not to say intentional deception, as to destroy all confidence in his recorded utterances on any subject.

It is to ignore the careful and prolonged training of the first disciples by Christ in all the Scriptures

in the things pertaining to himself, and to deny the promise of Christ and its fulfillment, of the gift of the Holy Spirit to those who were appointed to be the guides and instructors of men in the saving truths of the gospel.

Moreover, it is to ascribe to a so-called hermeneutical science, that has been projected by fallible men, an infallibility which is denied to the Lord Jesus Christ. This science is confessedly of recent origin, and thus far has led to most divergent results. It may be that to call it a science at all is to attribute to it a character which does not belong to it, to ascribe to it an authority which it does not deserve, and to give to its conflicting conclusions a certainty which their very antagonisms make impossible. Science deals with facts, and has to do with certified knowledge.

There are certain principles of interpretation which are fundamental; but there is none that is more fundamental than this, that the Old Testament must be interpreted in the light of the New. He who would understand either must understand both. He who would accept either must accept both. Professor Sayce, the distinguished archæologist of Oxford, who has done much to show not only the weakness but the folly of a purely linguistic and conjectural criticism, says:

> The New Testament cannot be easily separated from its forerunner, the Old. Not only does the New Testament

presuppose the Old, it presupposes also the historical credibility of the Old. The appeal to the law and the prophets would lose its weight, if the law were not what the Jews of the first century believed it to be, or if the Messiah of the prophets were not Jesus of Nazareth.

And he does not hesitate, in the light of the monumental testimony of the past, which is in such a wonderful way confirming the antiquity and the credibility of the Bible, to pronounce much of the biblical criticism of to-day "extravagant," "unscientific," and "unhistoric." And in this judgment he is supported by some of the ablest scholars of two continents. The archæologists are uniformly on the side of the traditional interpretation of the Scriptures. We may affirm, therefore, that biblical criticism is hardly in a position to claim infallibility, and that though Christ may have been unacquainted with the methods of so-called scientific criticism, he could not have mistaken the meaning of his own Bible, the Scriptures which his Spirit is declared to have inspired and given to men.

It should be added that because the rabbinical interpreters sometimes carried their Messianic interpretations too far, and became fanciful in their views, that does not in any degree affect the fact that there are genuine predictions of Christ "in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms." The careful and conservative use of

Messianic quotations by New Testament writers, on the other hand, is evidence that they were not carried off their feet by the spirit of the time, but were rather under the guidance of the Spirit of God. They too spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They were inspired interpreters of inspired prophecies.

The consideration which we have given to these Messianic portions of the Hebrew Scriptures, has served to emphasize three important facts.

First, there is a visible progress in the revelation contained in the Bible, from Genesis onward, through moral precept, prophetic utterance, personal type, and religious ceremony, until, "in the fullness of time" the revelation culminated in the coming, the person, the mission, the doctrine, the work of Jesus Christ. And it may be added that in the New Testament there is a progressive unfolding of divine truth as the minds of the disciples were able to apprehend it; all being under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, sometimes called the Spirit of God and sometimes the Spirit of Christ; so that the Bible can be understood only as its books are studied in their relation to each other, being bound together by a clearly recognizable purpose, and unified into a complete whole, and constituting in their entirety God's highest and fullest revelation of himself to his intelligent moral creatures, vastly superior, both as imaging the being and character

of God and as meeting the spiritual necessities of men, to the revelation which the material universe contains, and enforcing and supplementing in most necessary ways the testimony of the ethical nature of man to the existence and government of God. This progress in revelation is not a progress from error to truth, but from incompleteness to completeness, from truth to larger truth, from prophecy to fulfillment, from the bulb and the root to the consummate flower and fruit. The life is the same in its various manifestations. The unity of revelation is preserved in its progressive stages. The Old Testament and the New are forever bound together by the cords of fulfilled prophecy.

Secondly, the existence of veritable prophecy establishes the fact of the inspiration of the Scriptures which contain it. A single prophecy and its fulfillment might be an accident. But a whole series of prophecies, scores and hundreds, which are known to have come to pass, must certify to the divine origin of the book in which they are found. They constitute an indisputable supernatural element in the holy Scriptures of our faith. They are the evidence of the indwelling in the minds of the writers of the omniscient Spirit of God. It is the supernatural foreseeing and foretelling, and not the natural imagining and guessing. The Bible cannot be regarded as the product of unaided natural forces, simply the result of the in-

tellectual activity of the times in which its books were produced, a local, uninspired, humanly constructed literature, and therefore without special authority or claim upon the reverence and faith of mankind.

These books must have, to some extent, a local and temporal coloring. The divine stream must flow through human channels. The divine message must find expression in human language. God's life and God's thought, in order to reach and affect men, must be interwoven with the history of men and of nations. There must be a human element in revelation. "Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." If in the past the human element in the Scriptures has been overlooked, it is undoubtedly true that "the opposite tendency now prevails, namely, of emphasizing the human element to the detriment of the divine." Another has said :

> Just in proportion as modern criticism of the Bible assigns the controlling power in the composition of the Scriptures to the human factor uninfluenced by the divine, does it depart from the traditional views of the evangelical church, and make the holy records more a production of man than of the Holy Ghost.

The whole purpose of revelation would be thwarted, if the human element in it were such as to destroy or disturb confidence in the divine element and purpose in it, and the former were

not kept in subordination to the latter and under its supreme control, leaving the product God's message, God's thought, God's will, expressing itself unmistakably to men, clothed with divine authority, containing its own credentials, able to enforce its own claims, and in some way to authenticate itself to the intelligence and conscience, the faith and obedience of men. In some true sense the gospel is "its own witness," to use Andrew Fuller's phrase, testifying to the world its divine character and supernatural origin, and carrying conviction to every mind that is willing to be convinced, that it is not of men, but of God, that it is not of evolution, but of inspiration.

Suppose the Bible to be the product of natural forces; then we have no standard of authority outside of the incomplete, indistinct, and changeful utterances of our own consciousness. Every man becomes not only his own pope, but his own Bible, whose utterance, affected by the introduction of sin into the world, may be as ambiguous and untrustworthy as a heathen oracle. On the other hand, suppose the Bible to be inspired and guided in its teachings by the Spirit of God; then we have an authoritative utterance, a supreme guide to faith and duty, a standard of final appeal in morals and religion, a revelation for all lands and all ages of the world.

And thirdly, our study of the Messianic psalms

has impressed us with the fact that Christ was the sum and object of all revelation. The light of divine prophecy, with its splendid and multitudinous rays, converged in him. The star in the East, which appeared at the birth of the Saviour, was but the materialization of that prophetic star which had been shining through all the previous centuries of the history of God's chosen people. The Christ of history was preceded by the Christ of prophecy. It is the same Christ. The biography was outlined and the picture limned centuries before he was born. There is no mistaking the identity of the picture and the reality. We need not now inquire, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" We can say, as Philip said to Nathanael, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write." Other prophecies there are, recorded in the Old Testament and New, some of which have been unmistakably fulfilled, and others yet await their accomplishment. All these are proof that God has knowledge and supervision of human history. But the primary function of divine prophecy was the revelation of Jesus Christ, the Messiah of the Jews, and the Redeemer of the world. This supernatural element in God's plan for the instruction, the moral elevation, the recovery of lost men, may be said to have been introduced as a necessary means in making ready the thought and life of the world for the

great Incarnation, in establishing the claims of the incarnate Son of God upon the faith and obedience of men, and in linking the destiny of the race with the progress and triumph of his kingdom, as foretold by himself, as well as by those whose lips were opened by his Spirit, both before and after him. Dr. George A. Gordon says:

> The Bible is the monumental record of the monumental revelation of the mind of God to mankind. The great instrument of this disclosure of the thought of the Eternal is prophetic genius, and this mediating instrumentality becomes supreme and final in the prophetic mind of Jesus Christ.

No sane mind can question that the object was worthy of the supernatural means, that the person and mission of the Son of God are an anthem worthy of the prolonged prophetic prelude, that those brief, but glorious years of earthly manifestation and the results which have already followed among men and nations, amply justify the slow centuries of inspired anticipation and reiterated hope.

Christ, to whom the burden of prophecy pointed, was and has remained the highest expression of Godhood and manhood that has appeared in human history, or that has been conceived by man. Men have obtained new and exalted conceptions of Deity as they have known Christ, and new and exalted conceptions of human life as well. The

language of Edwin Arnold presents an exalted human aspect of Christ's personality which hardly escapes being divine:

> First born of heaven, first soul of human souls,
> Which touched the top of manhood, and from height
> Of Godlike pure humanity reached God.

Christ's own words have been uniformly accepted as descriptive of his relation to Deity and to the life of humanity: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God," the only being in whom the idea of God has been perfectly realized, "and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," the only being in whom the idea of God has been perfectly manifested. And so to millions of our race the Christ of Bethlehem and of Calvary has become the source of eternal life, of spiritual peace, and of immortal hope. They have accepted him as the ordained Prophet of absolute and saving truths, the anointed Priest who is the sufficient sacrifice for human guilt, and the King of rightful and blessed reign. He has become to them the Alpha and Omega of personal faith and experience.

> Through him the first fond prayers are said,
> Our lips of childhood frame;
> The last low whispers of our dead
> Are burdened with his name.

It should not be forgotten that there needs to be a spiritual preparation for the apprehension of

Christ. To know him simply within the limits of his ~~early~~ manifestation, as a man among men, is to know but a small segment of his being, and to fail to know even that truly. No man knows a segment who does not know the circle to which it belongs. The circle of Christ's being is larger than the natural eye can take in. Sympathy is the widest door to knowledge. Love generates insight. Only a mind that has been touched by the Spirit of Christ can apprehend the person of Christ in prophecy or history or present glory. The historic Christ is not the whole Christ. The apostles, who had known the Christ of prophecy and the Christ of history, passed on to a still larger knowledge of him after his resurrection. Though they had known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth they acknowledged that they knew him within such narrow limitations no more. The person of Christ as well as all the truths of his kingdom are spiritually discerned. No wiser words, or more necessary, have been written than these by Rev. Stanley Leathes:

> It will not be enough to have known Christ after the flesh. To be in harmony with these ancient writers, we must know him as they knew him. We must have the veil rent aside from our eyes that we may look straight into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. It is Christ as a living person, and not merely as a character of the historic past, a speaking but inanimate portrait in the gallery of time, that we must set before us. It is the spiritual person of the

Messiah, existing *now*, as then, in the fullness of essential Godhead, with whom we must hold communion. We likewise must be partakers of a Messianic consciousness and have a personal knowledge of the person of the Lord's Anointed, before we can appreciate all that prophets and kings have said of him. And to this end we must be filled with the Spirit that abode on him, whose office it is to take of the things of Christ and show them unto us, for we have been assured on apostolic authority that "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

Christ has vindicated his claim as the worthy object of divine prophecy, not only by his ministry to millions of men as their personal Saviour, but by his moral influence upon society as a social regenerator. Wherever Christianity has been received as a spiritual faith, its fruits have been abundant, and uniformly the same. Wherever it has had free course, it has been glorified. It has reformed men, has sweetened and sanctified the family and the home, has made the life of woman tolerable and her happiness secure, has regenerated social life, has changed customs, has affected legislation, has elevated nations, and has purified civilizations, so far as they have been purified. It has done not a little to bring about that new social order, which is distinctly portrayed in the Messianic prophecies. And this it has done through the wonderful personal influence of its divine founder. One needs but to read such books as Uhlhorn's "Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism," Schmidt's "*Essai*

Historique," Brace's "*Gesta Christi*," Storrs' "The Divine Origin of Christianity indicated by its Historical Effects," or even that popular historical novel "Quo Vadis," to be persuaded that for whatever is highest and best, aye, for whatever is decent and respectable, in our social life and our modern civilization, we are indebted to the life and teaching of the Man of Galilee. One testimony will be sufficient to prove what no one calls in question. Lecky, in his "History of European Morals," says:

> It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character, who through all the ages of eighteen centuries has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love; has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments, and conditions; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice, and has exercised so deep an influence that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists.

It remains only to be said that He, in whose character and in the incidents of whose recorded life, from his birth to his death and resurrection, so much of ancient prophecy was fulfilled, and who has already pushed on his foretold conquests over so much of the earth's surface, cannot fail to bring all nations at last into subjection to himself according to the declared will of God. Not yet are all

things fulfilled "which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms" concerning him. The prophetic Christ and the historic Christ must be the triumphant Christ. Prophecy fulfilled is the pledge of the fulfillment of remaining prophecy. No Christian can despair of the victory of truth over falsehood and error, of righteousness over sin, of purity over all forms of corruption, of peace over hatred and strife, of light over darkness, of Christian missions over all false religions, of the Lord Christ over the opposing forces of evil in the world. Christianity is declared to be the progressive, exclusive, and final religion. That it may be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, "He shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." That it may be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, "All kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him." That it may be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." That it may be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, "In his name every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father." That it may be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, "The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

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